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BULLETIN

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A monthly publication of the East Africa Natural History Society, Box 44486, Nairobi, Kenya. Price 2 shillings

NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Members of the Society (and non-members) are asked to follow these simple instructions when writing articles or letters for submission to the *Bulletin*. The *Bulletin* is presented each month in a duplicated format: the paper size is 20.5×23 cm (10×8 inches), line drawings can be reproduced but the area should not be more than 17.5×23 cm. Lettering on figures should preferably be in 'Letraset', neatly done in Indian ink or left blank: if the last method is followed, the lettering should be indicated on an overlaying sheet and should not be done on the figure. Figures should be prepared on good quality white writing paper and not on Bristol Board or other thick material. Whenever plants or animals are mentioned the scientific name should also be given but not in parenthesis. Trinomials should not be used unless there is good reason to do so. Author's names of species are not required.

Contributions may be typed (preferably) or written and should be sent to: G. C. Backhurst, Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi, Kenya. Receipt of contributions will be acknowledged.

EANHS BULLETIN JANUARY 1975

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HOW TO IDENTIFY BUTTERFLIES TO THEIR FAMILIES - PART 3

SATYRIDAE - THE BROWNS

This family is made up of large to small butterflies which are mostly brown in colour, though there is one silvery-white, and also one which is zebra-striped, in East Africa.

In the field the best character to go by is the dark colour and the flight pattern. This flight pattern is very distinctive, the butterfly dropping with wings closed between the grass stems, then a quick flip with the wings which raises it up, then the drop again. All the Satyridae have this flight, only copied by one other butterfly in East Africa, that being one of the Pieridae, which is dead white. They are found in woodland, and mostly at the edge of forest.

In the hand look for the very short front legs, the white-pupilled eyespots on both hind and fore wings and the scales of the wings appearing to be very thick. This contrasts with the next family, the Nymphalidae, where the scales appear to be very thin.

The sexes can be identified by looking at the fore-legs. In the male these are very short and hairy, in the female less hairy and (under a microscope) show all the segments, some of which are lost in the male.

The eggs are squat and barrel-shaped and have longitudinal ribs up the sides. They are laid singly on grass-stems and leaves. They are usually green turning darker before hatching.

The caterpillars are very distinctive, usually green in colour, often with a forked process on the head and always with a forked tail. When hidden amongst grass stems they are almost impossible to see.

The pupae are squat, rounded with a pointed head and tail, held up by a silk pad at the tail to any handy grass stem or small branch. They are usually green, sometimes with brown patches, and look very like a leaf which has just blown down from a tree.

M.P. Clifton, Entomologist,
National Museum,
Box 40658,
Nairobi.

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MELANISTIC SERVAL CATS, MELANISTIC WILD CAT AND BONGO

With reference to the articles by A.D. & R.M. Irvin (*EANHS Bull.* 1974:148-149) and D.K. Jones (*EANHS Bull.* 1974:162-163) I would also like to report on melanistic Serval Cats *Felis serval* in the Aberdare National Park. During September I visited the park with Mr Ian Hardy, and we spotted one melanistic Serval at an altitude of approximately 3250 m. Mr Hardy, who works at The Ark, reports that on every occasion he visits the moorlands, he sees several of these black cats, and never a normal coloured one.

Leaving the Park by what is known as Wandare's track, a beautiful route, but an almost impassable road, we saw another black cat which we took to be another Serval. This animal, unlike the first one, was very shy and we did not get the binoculars on it. However, the ears were too short and the tail too long for a Serval, and the only thing it could have been was a melanistic Wild Cat *Felis libyca.* Mr Bill Woodly, Warden of Mountain National Parks, informed me that he had never seen a melanistic Wild Cat in the Aberdares, but, while not doubting my identification, suggested the possibility that it might have been a feral domestic cat.

As I work at the Ark, in the Aberdares, I get an unique opportunity to watch Bongo *Tragelaphus euryceros* which are now coming there in fairly large numbers. During September 1974, 131 Bongos were seen from the buildings in 19 nights, and in October 71 individuals were seen in 13 nights.

The Bongo is, in my opinion, one of the few examples among animals where the female is more beautiful than the male, due to her bright chestnut-red colouration and much slimmer spiralled horns. Several small calves have also been in for the salt, the youngest was estimated to be seven weeks old. This was done by comparing the size with that of a five-week calf born to a female collected by Don Hunt and kept at the Mt. Kenya Safari Club.

I have noticed that it is fairly simple to tell one Bongo from another by the number and pattern of the vertical stripes on the body, and the size and shape of the white cheek patches. It is hoped that I will soon be able to start a general study on this rare forest antelope, based at The Ark, in order to add to the scant information available on this virtually unknown animal.

I hope that the Society will be able to arrange to have a trip up there in the not too distant future.

Dennie Angwin,
Box 72833,
Nairobi.

OLOLOKWE CAMP

Over the weekend 12th to 15th December 1974, the Society organised one of its longer camps. In spite of obvious difficulties these have been very successful in the past and the present one was no exception. The camp was held at Ololokwe, a small mountain with a magnificent precipice which is familiar to everyone who has travelled the Marsabit Road though they may not know its name. Behind the precipice the mountain is divided in two by a small wooded valley and it was at the mouth of this that our camp was pitched. We were under the guidance of Miss Jill Donnisthorpe who knows this mountain well. It was a beautiful camp site under big thorn trees, and the area is rich in flowers and birds and as it proved in larger game too. Some bird watchers came unexpectedly on an elephant. In these days of cars and National Parks it is extra thrilling to encounter an animal on foot and in the genuine wild. We were, of course, careful not to disturb it and fortunately it and its friends kept away from our camp, which indeed was spread over quite a large area with many fires.

About fifty people made the journey on Thursday, and some others arrived the next day. On the Friday most of us climbed at least part of the way up the mountain and about 15 reached the top. Views from there must be magnificent and the vegetation and general ecology most interesting. Many Rüppel's Griffon Vultures *Gypaetus rueppelli* were soaring all day over and round the cliffs and Verreaux's Eagle *Aquila verreauxii* was reported from the top. For people who remained at the bottom or explored it later in the day, there was much of interest. A large and busy colony of the Black-capped Social Weavers *Pseudonigrita cabanisi*, occupied a tree near the camp, and a Didric Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx caprius* was hanging around and no doubt watching its opportunity. The white form of the Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone viridis* was seen and many Grey Tits *Parus afer*, Crombecs *Sylvietta leucophrys*, Violet-backed Sunbirds *Anthreptes orientalis* and Red-tailed Shrikes *Lanius collurio isabellinus* were seen. A pair of tiny Bush Babies (presumably *Galago senegalensis*) gave great pleasure to those who saw them.

The disadvantage of the camp was lack of water, as it is very difficult to carry enough for so hot a place. The third night would probably have been very uncomfortable for most of us had not two members rashly announced their intention of visiting Samburu Game Reserve and been promptly innundated with empty jerry cans and requests to fill them. Their kindness made the third evening much more enjoyable. Next day though most people returned to their homes some had further adventures in Samburu Game Reserve. There are beautiful camping sites on Champagne Ridge but these, alas, were covered with tins, bottles and bits of paper, despite the written appeals to keep them clean. However, the birds do not mind litter, and Superb Starlings *Speo superbus* and Stripe-breasted Sparrow Weavers *Plocepasser mahali* came immediately into camp demanding food. The young starlings were most amusing, standing by the food with open mouths though quite capable of picking it up for themselves. The camp area was rich in birds. A Hoopoe's *Upupa epops* nest was found and a White-throated Robin *Irania gutturalis* was seen also Woodpeckers and Donaldson's-Smith's Sparrow Weaver was numerous.

Priscilla Allen.

DO YOU KNOW THAT:- PART VI

termites do not eat wood! They chew wood from dead twigs, buildings etc. and take the pulp back to their nests where it is laid down in gardens. It is used for growing a species of fungus which is the staple food of the termites. The fungus cannot grow without the termite, and vice versa. The female winged termites, on leaving the old nest on their pairing flight, take a small amount of the fungus in a special pouch in their heads to start a new farm in the new nest.

ants keep cows! Most true ants milk various insects which include larval bugs, green fly and caterpillars of the butterfly family Lycenidae (Blues) for sweet secretions. To obtain the secretions, the ants stroke them on the part which gives the liquid, varying with each family. The ants tend the 'cows' and protect them from predators for anything up to several months. Often when the plant on which the 'cows' are feeding starts to die, or becomes diseased, the ants move them to pastures new. Sometimes they even build a shed over them to protect them from the sun and as a further protection from parasites. The ants use the secretions for food. Most of the 'cows' would die without the attention of the ants as the secretions become hard and start to form a mould.

some insects catch their prey with their hind legs. The Bittacid family, commonly known as Gnat Scorpion Flies, look like large crane flies, but have four wings. They inhabit secondary growth forest, and have a novel means of catching their prey. The adult flies hang from a twig or a piece of grass with their front legs, the other legs hanging down. Any insect flying into the legs is grabbed, bitten and paralised with a mild poison. The Gnat Scorpion Fly then settles with all legs on the support to feed off the prey.

during research currently being carried out at The Ark, in the Aberdare National Park, the moths collected at the lights at night are proving to be 20% new to science! Although the Aberdare range has not been collected thoroughly, this number is rather surprising. Work continues on the collection; just the other day five species were brought to Nairobi, two of which were unknown. The new moths will be described shortly in the Society's Journal.

M.P. Clifton, Entomologist,
National Museum,
Box 40658,
Nairobi.

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REVIEW

BIRD RINGING (British Trust for Ornithology Guide No.16) by Chris Mead, 1974.
Tring:B.T.O. Pp. 68, 13 black and white plates and numerous maps.
Paper bound, 15 X 21 cm. Overseas price including surface postage £0.55
from B.T.O., Beech Grove, Tring, Herts HP23 5NR, England.

This useful, fact-filled book is directed at people who are interested in birds but who are not ringers but, as Sir Landsborough Thomson says in the Foreward, ringers will find the book worth having, especially for the selection of recovery maps which occupies the second half of the book.

There are sections covering the bird in the hand - moult, weights, measurements wing formulae and other data on feather wear, shape and markings useful in identification and aging; the analysis of recoveries, not just where they go to but, with often many hundreds or even thousands of recoveries to work with, their temporal distribution, differences between young and old birds and areas of ringing and different recovery methods (often in relation to areas of recovery and time of year). Surprisingly perhaps, there seems to be no mention of the parasites carried by birds although British ringers do not neglect this subject.

This excellent little book is now in the Society's Library.

Graeme Backhurst.

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RINGING NEWS

From time to time I hear reports of the duck shooting at Lakes Ol Bolossat and Naivasha. At Ol Bolossat hundreds are shot in a day, yet, apart from a few recoveries of Kenya-ringed Hottentot Teal *Anas hottentota* from this lake, I have heard of no recoveries of foreign-ringed birds. It seems inconceivable that no Palaearctic-ringed duck are shot at Ol Bolossat: I appeal to all duck shooters and those who know shooters to make a special effort to sort through the day's bag and to let me have any rings found plus details (date and place) of the recoveries. Although the finder may send off the ring to the country concerned, the foreign ringing offices do not (with two exceptions) inform the E.A. Scheme. Further, since a number of northern ringing schemes do not publish their results, these recoveries become 'lost' to the international record.

The 15th and 16th Annual ringing report from Nigeria (R.E. Sharland, 1974 *Nigerian Orn. Soc. Bull.* 10:69-73) contains two items of interest in this connection: 96 Garganey *A. querquedula* have been ringed in Nigeria and three have already been recovered, two to the U.S.S.R. and one to Greece. In addition, a Garganey ringed in India in 1971 was shot in Nigeria in February 1973 - not bad going!

Graeme Backhurst,
Box 29003, Kabete.

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

As Warden of Mt. Elgon and Saiwa Swamp National Parks, I was very interested to read Mr L.A. Grumbley's short article in last month's edition of the *Bulletin*.

We have been undertaking a programme of road improvements since my transfer to Mt. Elgon and the end of the rains; unfortunately Mr Grumbley visited the Park when it was still wet and such work was difficult to initiate. Culverts have now been installed in a number of places, roads graded and bad patches murramed. The morass mentioned in the article is actually outside the Park boundary, but since it is on one of the only access roads to the Moorland, we have done our best to make it passable.

We hope that these improvements will give visitors an easier access to Mt. Elgon and that the longer stay Mr Grumbley plans will be a pleasant one; we would suggest that October - March is the best time to visit the Park.

Hassan S. Mohamed, Warden,
Mt. Elgon National Park,
Box 753, Kitale, Kenya.

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LIBRARY NOTICE

DUE TO A RECENT FORGERY OF A MEMBER'S SIGNATURE RESULTING IN THE THEFT OF TWO BOOKS FROM THE LIBRARY, THE COMMITTEE HAS RULED THAT FUTURE BOOK LOANS WILL ONLY BE ALLOWED ON PRESENTATION OF A VALID MEMBERSHIP CARD.

Hon Secretary,
E.A.N.H.S.

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THE KENYAN GEOGRAPHER

The above Journal will soon start publication. Anyone wishing to contribute should contact Dr Jean Palutikof, Department of Geography, University of Nairobi, Box 30197, Nairobi. (Telephone 34244 ext. 489).

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EDITORIAL NOTE

From this issue I intend to do away with the 'anonymity' of reviewers.

Ed.

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SOCIETY FUNCTIONS

Monday, 13th January 1975 at 5.15 p.m.: at the National Museum Hall, Nairobi. Talk and slide show on birds by Dr G. Irvine.

11th/12th January 1975: Weekend camp at Ngobit *c.* 240 km from Nairobi via Naro Moru, by kind invitation of the Carnegie family. Campers should be self contained with camping equipment, food and drinking water. Firewood will be available, altitude 2250 m. Please fill in the enclosed slip and return to the Secretary. Directions will then be sent.

19th January 1975: Day walk in the Mt. Longonot area. Meet at the National Museum at 8.30 a.m. or Longonot Station at 10 a.m. Bring a picnic lunch. A small charge will be made to pay for a Guard for the cars. The walk will be led by Dr F. Radar.

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NEW MEMBERS - JANUARY 1975

Full members:

Mr R.G. Barber, Box 30197, Nairobi.
Mr M. den Boer, Box 30772, Nairobi.
Dr P.E. Coode, Box 30588, Nairobi.
Mrs D. Coward, Box 40231, Nairobi.
Mr C.P.F. De Lima, Box 30028, Nairobi.
Dr B. Johnston, Box 30197, Nairobi.
Mr E.C. Holloway, Box 41221, Nairobi.
Mr Norma Kanja, Box 30028, Nairobi.
Prof. J. Ketcheson, Box 30028, Nairobi.
Mr C.F. Lagerberg, Box 14, Kiambu, Kenya.
Mr M. Lea, Box 48975, Nairobi.
Mr D. Macharia, Box 30197, Nairobi.
Mr P. Mansfield, Box 30465, Nairobi.
The Marianists, Box 72000, Nairobi.
Mrs T.C.H. Mathews, Box 24758, Nairobi.
Mr J. O'Gorman, Box 96064, Likoni, via Mombasa.
Dr H. Osmaston, Dept. of Geography, The University, Bristol 8, U.K.
Mrs F. Steadman, Box 5052, Chogoria, Meru, Kenya.
Mr K.A. Smith, Box 82, Lamu.
Mr J. Ward, Box 44517, Nairobi.

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THE EAST AFRICA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Chairman: J. S. Karmali

Vice Chairman: Mrs J. Hayes

Editor, Jl E. Africa nat. Hist. Soc. Nat. Mus.: Dr P. J. Greenway O.B.E.

Secretary: Mrs D. Collins

Librarian: Miss P. M. Allen

Treasurer: M. P. Clifton

Executive Committee (in addition to the above): Miss D. Angwin; G. C. Backhurst (*Ringing Organizer* and *Editor EANHS Bulletin*); Mrs A. L. Campbell; A. D. Forbes-Watson; R. E. F. Leakey; E. T. Monks; N. Myers.

Co-opted Members: Mrs H. A. Britton (*Nest Record Scheme Organizer*); N. Chumo; A. Duff-MacKay; D. Mbuvi; T. D. Morris; Mrs L. Ndegwa; Mrs F. Ng'weno; Mrs I. Preston.

The Journal Editorial Sub Committee consists of Dr Greenway, Miss Angwin, G. C. Backhurst, M. P. Clifton, A. D. Forbes-Watson and Mrs Hayes.

MEMBERSHIP

This offers you free entry to the National Museum, Nairobi; free lectures, films, slide shows or discussions every month in Nairobi; field trips and camps led by experienced guides; free use of the joint Society-National Museum Library (postal borrowing is also possible); reciprocal arrangements with the Uganda Society's Library in the Uganda Museum, Kampala; family participation: wives and children of members may attend most Society functions; one copy of the *EANHS Bulletin* every month; a copy of each *Journal* published during your period of membership; the Society controls the ringing of birds in East Africa and welcomes new ringers; the Society runs an active Nest Record Scheme; activities such as plant mapping and game counting are undertaken on a group basis. Membership rates are given at the foot of this page.

JOURNAL

The Society publishes a leading and highly respected scientific journal—*The Journal of the East Africa Natural History Society and National Museum*. Each issue consists usually of one paper, however, sometimes two or more short papers may be combined to form one number. The aim of this method of presentation is to ensure prompt publication of scientific information; a title page is issued at the end of each year so that the year's papers may be bound together. Contributions, which should be typed in double spacing on one side of the paper, with wide margins, should be sent to the Secretary, Box 44486, Nairobi, Kenya. Authors receive twenty-five reprints of their article free, provided that these are ordered at the time the proofs are returned.

E.A.N.H.S. BULLETIN

This is a duplicated monthly magazine which exists for the rapid publication of short notes, articles, letters and reviews. Contributions, which may be written in clear handwriting or typed, should be sent to the Editor (*EANHS Bulletin*), P.O. Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi, Kenya. Line drawings will be considered if they add to the value of the article, photographs cannot be published.

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Subscriptions are due 1st January. From 1st July you may join at half the yearly rate and receive publications from that date. Application forms for membership are obtainable from the Secretary, Box 44486. Nairobi.

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BREEDING OF NARINA'S TROGON *APALODERMA NARINA* AT KAREN

There are five pairs of Narina's Trogons in our forest at Karen and males were calling loudly during May and June 1974, however by August calling had almost ceased but one male in the forest territory behind my house behaved suspiciously and changed its usual "advertising" call to a series of very low almost inaudible notes. I followed this bird around its territory for several days and eventually found the female. The male often called this new low note and the female would approach him, alighting nearby, if not on the same branch. This behaviour suggested possible breeding intentions so daily observations were made and on 30th August the female was seen to visit a rot hole, some 12m up in a croton tree, where she remained for some time, eventually the male also visited this hole.

On the following day the female was again at the hole and I assumed (wrongly as it turned out) that this was the nest hole. In order not to disturb the birds too much I did not visit the tree for a week but after a long wait no birds visited this hole, it seemed that this site had been abandoned, however the next day while watching I saw the female fly up to another hole in a croton closeby, this was only some 5m up. The birds were very shy and I did not see them visit this hole again which suggested they were only investigating.
On several further visits I could only find the male bird, its presence being located by listening for the low calls, but there was no sign of the female; but on 8th October I found the female again at the second nest hole so judged that she must have been sitting close and probably had hatched young.
A search of the forest floor was undertaken and two halves of an egg were found. I climbed to the nest the following day and found it contained three very small almost naked youngsters with bright orange gapes. There was no nest lining whatsover. The youngsters hissed loudly when disturbed.

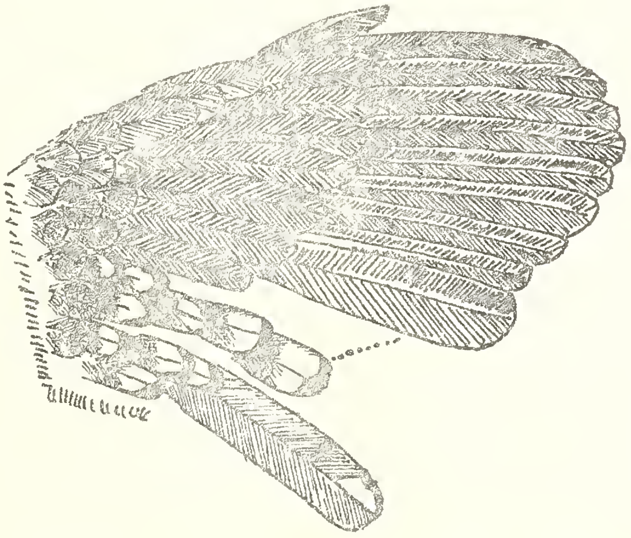
Feeding was undertaken by both parents but the rate was agonisingly slow (for me) and was at intervals of half to three-quarters of an hour, both birds brought large caterpillars. The birds would leave the nest and start their search just sitting quietly and looking slowly round and up and down, then a sudden dart into the foliage to seize a caterpillar and the bird would alight and repeat the long gaze, searching for another caterpillar. Eventually when three or four caterpillars had been secured the birds would make the very wary approach back to the nest, moving by short flights nearer and nearer to the tree, then one would fly up to the nest cling on to the rim of the hole, feed the young and fly off, then the second bird would visit and feed the young. Feeding was rapid and never lasted more than a minute. The male, according to my notes, fed the young more oten than the female and at shorter intervals.

As I intended to try some photography, I moved closer and closer to the nest tree each day until the hide was only 10m from the tree and at this range it was possible to see that the majority of caterpillars which the birds were collecting were the smooth forms of the *Papillio* species and hawk moths (Sphingids) - these were held across the beak. Most of the *Papillio* caterpillars were taken from *Teclea* spp. trees, host of several species of these swallow-tail butterflies. By 19th October the feeding rate had increased slightly so I decided to put up the recording dish by the hide to get some sound recordings. On 20th October I went to the hide and waited but no birds visited the nest and there was no sign of them in the vicinity and no calling. This was puzzling. I found the answer when I walked over to my lab. for on the path, under the fig tree, there were trogon feathers which I collected up, two wings, the head and other feathers from a near fledgling trogon. It was clear the nest hole had been visited by a predator. I climbed to the nest hole and found it empty.

We organised an intensive search and eventually located the female and we followed her around carefully until she finally visited a hole high up in an olive tree. She was carrying caterpillars, but when she left her beak was empty so apparently at least one youngster was safe in the new nest site. To this day we have not seen a sign of the male so must presume that it was also killed.

I would not have believed that the youngsters were really capable of flight for the wing of the victim is only 8.0 cm at the longest primary and the base of all the primaries and secondaries are still sheathed, these and the coverts are dark sooty grey with a faint tinge of green. The base of the secondaries are white; the median wing coverts are irridescent green, some with large rounded spots of white tinged ochreous at the edges, these very conspicuous. Outer tail feathers white. Throat and breast ochreous with a greenish wash, the tips of each feather. The bill, upper mandible greenish yellow and the lower more yellow. Gape still orange.

On 22nd November while in my lab. I heard an unusual call and on investigation found a young trogon in the fig tree which allowed very close approach. This must have been one of the surviving youngsters. The tail was fully developed and long, conspicuously white. Flanks showed the pinkish red and the large spots on the median wing coverts were conspicuous. The call was quite different from that of adult birds which I can only describe as a low "chour".



Figure, Remains of wing to show spotted feathers

The predator we consider to be the Goshawk *Accipiter tachiro* for a pair frequents our forest and they take their toll of young birds, particularly cuckoos and doves. On 18th October I returned to the house and my gardner, Mwaniki, said he had captured a Hartlaub's Plantain-eater *Tauraco hartlaubi*. This he said had been chased round the forest near the trogon nest tree and the bird had eventually fallen exhausted near him so he had saved it and put it in the aviary. I examined it and found it uninjured but very exhausted. After a time it was released and flew off. Mwaniki knows the goshawk well so it is very likely this was the predator that took the trogons.

Nesting periods for Karen do not conform to any pattern for we have found eggs on 16th May, two broken eggs below a nest hole. Eggs in May recorded by my cousin; the present nest in October and young just on the wing in February. Brown (1970) records nesting from March to May, this for the Langata side of Karen, the Ololua forest. So it would appear that there are two nesting periods, to some extent coinciding with or following the rains, periods when there should be an abundance of caterpillars for the young.

While watching the trogons on 9th and 10th October I had very close views of a fine yellow-billed African Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus gularis* which searched the foliage just above me and was taking hairy caterpillars, probably Lasiocampids or Lymantrids from the fig tree.

G.R. Cunningham-van Someren,
Box 24947, Karen.

REFERENCE:

Brown, L.A. 1970 Recent new breeding records for Kenya. *Bull.Br.Orn.Club* 90:3-5.

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BREEDING OF STUHLMANN'S STARLING *POEOPTERA STUHLMANNI*

During a visit to Kericho on 5th December 1974, my hostess drew my attention to the nesting holes of a woodpecker in a dead jacaranda tree. We went to investigate and found several woodpecker holes but no birds were present, however to my surprise, I found a pair of Stuhlmann's Starlings going in and out of a hole, the highest of a series of five holes about 10 m up. A second pair of starlings was also present and it was noted that the male, the darker bird, repeatedly offered the female some object it carried in its beak. It made fluttering movements of the wings then sidled up to the female and made the offer. This apparent courtship act was repeated several times.

The nesting pair repeatedly visited the nest hole, which I believe must have contained eggs, for the birds chased away a large honey-guide, which we saw imperfectly, either the Black-throated *Indicator indicator* or the Scaly-throated *I. variegatus*.

Alas, pressure of business did not allow for a longer period of observation however, I believe this short note to be the first to record that Stuhlmann's

Starling uses old woodpecker holes for nesting and that at Kericho, early December is the breeding time. Praed & Grant, *African Hanbook of Birds* Series I. Vol.2 p.714 state "breeding, nest and eggs undescribed. (E.A.N.H.S. Nest Record No. CVS/74/137.

G.R. Cunningham-van Someren,
Box 24947, Karen.

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HOW DOES THE SKIMMER WET ITS EGGS ?

In *Ibis* 1971, 113:244 Turner and Gerhart describe the apparently hitherto unknown habit of foot-wetting by nesting Skimmers *Rynchops flavirostris* at Lake Rudolf, Kenya. They mention that after being relieved of incubation duties birds fly low over water, dipping their feet in it four or five times, and then return for a further spell of incubation. They suggest that this behaviour may be either to control incubation temperature or to make themselves more comfortable on the over-heated eggs.

In September 1973 I observed similar behaviour amongst Skimmers incubating eggs on the extremely hot sand beaches of the Luangwa River in eastern Zambia. However, I interpreted this behaviour rather differently, and the main aim of this note is to draw people's attention to the problem in the hope that someone may obtain further information. The birds I saw dipping their feet in the water as they flew low over it appeared to me to be splashing water onto their breast feathers. Two clutches of eggs that I examined immediately after an incubation change-over were very clearly wet on top.

Skimmers have very tiny feet and I felt at the time they could do little good standing on top of two large eggs with wet feet. Wet breast feathers are, on the other hand, used by several species of plover to dampen eggs, presumably to control their temperature during incubation. I think this is just what the Skimmer does, although it wets its feathers in a different manner from the plovers. But neither I nor Turner & Gerhart saw what a returning Skimmer does with its feet when sitting down on the eggs. Are cool feet perhaps just a pleasant 'perk' from the more important business of damping the eggs? Anyone able to watch nesting Skimmers closely, without disturbing them, should be able to explain this behaviour more accurately than we have been able to so far.

R.J. Dowsett,
Livingstone Museum,
Box 498,
Livingstone, Zambia.

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A FRIGATE BIRD IN MIDA CREEK

On 5th January 1975, when fishing in the evening in Mida Creek, I observed a Frigate Bird drifting slowly up the creek inland. It was soaring head to wind in a typical Frigate Bird manner, and drifted out of sight inland. However, presumably it finally roosted on the shore, which it could undoubtedly see from its soaring position. It appeared all black or dark brown, with no white markings at all, though it was a long way away when first seen. I therefore tentatively identified it as an adult male *Fregata minor*. It appeared decidedly smaller and lighter in build than *F. magnificans*, with which I was familiar in the West Indies long ago.

When fishing out to sea from Watamu, both on the Malindi banks and off Whale Island, at various times between 26th December 1974 and 2nd January 1975, the majority of the terns observed attending shoals of Tunny and Bonito appeared to be Little Terns *Sterna albifrons*. It is likely that this tern is commoner than has been supposed off the East African Coast in winter.

On 2nd January 1975 I also saw a moderate-sized all dark shearwater, possibly the Wedge-tailed *Procellaria pacifica*; however it was too far away to be certain of its identity.

L.H. Brown,
Box 24916,
Karen.

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LESSER SPOTTED EAGLE IN TSAVO NATIONAL PARK

On 27th October 1974, whilst enjoying some excellent birding with Daphne and Graeme Backhurst near Ngulia in Tsavo National Park (West), I saw an undoubted Lesser Spotted Eagle *Aquila pomarina*. The rather long and narrow wings, with no indentation in the trailing edge near the body, and the rather shorter, more fanned tail, are the best field characters to distinguish this species from Wahlberg's Eagle *A. wahlbergi*. Anyone having a reasonable eye for birds of prey would not confuse these two species with either Tawny *A. rapax* or Steppe Eagles *A. nipalensis*. The Tsavo bird was flying at a moderate height, and eventually it turned to show the upperparts; there was a good deal of white on the uppertail coverts and the wing coverts, showing it to be an immature bird.

Backhurst, Britton & Mann (*Jl E. Africa nat. Hist. Soc. Nat Mus.* 1973 140:7) give only one definite record of this species from Kenya, although Williams (*Field Guide to the National Parks* 1967: 79) lists it from Tsavo as a rare winter visitor, without documentation. Backhurst *et al.* remark that Eurasian eagles are notoriously difficult to identify and probably occur in East Africa more often than the records suggest. They point out that the Lesser

Spotted Eagle is regular in numbers in Zambia, where I know it well and where I have been able to support my visual observations with three specimens.

R.J. Dowsett,
Livingstone Museum,
Box 498,
Livingstone, Zambia.

NYMPHALIDAE - THE BRUSH-FOOTED BUTTERFLIES

This is one of the largest families of butterflies and posesses large to medium species. They are found all over East Africa, in nearly all habitats. The colours of these butterflies vary from black and white through grey to brilliant brick red and scarlet. Some of these species are territorial, chasing off all other butterflies from their little patch. A large number of species come to rotting fruit (with a few Satyridae) and some to damp patches.

The flight of these butterflies is nearly always fast and direct. One genus (*Charaxes*) are said to be the fastest butterflies in the world, 80 km/h (50 m.p.h.) having been estimated.

In the field, these butterflies can be identified by their habit, particularly in the morning and in sunny spells in dull weather, of sunning themselves with open wings, on leaves and clear patches amongst grass and foliage. Their quick flight, particularly when disturbed, and their tendency to return to the spot from which they were disturbed, help in identification. Some of the species float along with hardly a wing flap using up-currents of air, rather like storks.

In the hand the easiest way to identify these butterflies is to look at the forelegs. If they are hairy (thus Brush-footed) and not either Danaidae (see *EANHS Bulletin* 1973:135) or Satyridae (*EANHS Bulletin* 1975:2) then they are this family. Some experts lump all three families together. If the butterflies have eye-spots, these usually have a dark centre instead of a white one as found in the Satyridae. The wing scales look very thin though well coloured. The sexes can be identified in the same way as those of the Satyridae.

The eggs are usually squat having very pronounced ribs from the central pit to the base. The top is somewhat narrower than the base. They are usually green when first laid, turning brownish-grey before hatching.

The caterpillars have very prominent spines on the back and sides, and these have lesser spines at right angles to the main ones. Only one other group has this character, this being the Acraeidae. The *Euphaedra* group has all the spines pointing to the sides, making quite a defense against ants. Rarely are the caterpillars smooth. The food plants range from small Labiates only a centimetre or so high to Crotons and other trees.

The pupae are free, hanging from a small silk button either on a branch or other support. In fact, the word pupa (coming from the Greek) means doll, and refers to the brilliant gold patches to be found on some of these chrysalids. They usually have two points on the head and a bump on the back, so looking rather like Papilionidae pupae without the support round the middle. They are not as squat as the Satyridae, but tend to be longer and narrower. Of course, with such a large group (*c.* 485 species in Africa) it is impossible to generalise effectively.

M.P. Clifton,
Box 40658,
Nairobi.

THE STONEFISH

On 29th December 1974 my family and I were on the reef when my father found a very strange-looking fish. Its movements were so slow that my mother could easily poke it into a bucket with a tackle. We asked a fisherman what it was, and he told us that we would die if we trod on it. He called it a "Jungu".

When we got home, we looked it up in Simon Mollison's book, "Kenya's Coast" and discovered that it was a stone fish. It looked exactly like a stone or a piece of coral, with lichen growing on it. I noticed that on one side of its body, it had a small patch of pale pink, which looked just like a bit of coral. Its mouth was right at the front of its head, jutting out above the rest of its face. It had eyes like barnacles, and we could see its tiny gills moving as it breathed. Those were the only signs of life that we could see. It had huge fins like flippers, on the underside, with which it burrowed into the sand to secure itself. Also when it breathed, it moved its mouth so that we could see a set of very small, thin teeth.

After having a good look at it, we put it in a narrow, deep pool, on the edge of the reef, where we decided no one would be likely to tread on it.

A.J. Davies,
Kenton College,
Nairobi.

ADDENDUM:

I have been unable to assist by finding the scientific name of the species described above. Mollison *loc. cit.* does not give it, and indeed says: "There is, in fact, considerable doubt as to what exactly a stonefish is".

It is evidently very similar to *Synanceichthys verrucosus* described and illustrated in Smith's (*The Fishes of Seychelles*.. Publ. Dept of Ichthyology, Rhodes Univ., S. Africa. p.56, plate 97).

P.M. Allen,
Librarian.

GEESE IN ANCIENT EGYPT

A friend, a fellow member of the Society, sent me as a Christmas card, a postcard from the Cairo Museum of a painting of geese from Meidum, about 80 km south of Cairo. It is dated 2720 B.C. and is done with such attention to detail that one suspects a former incarnation of Peter Scott. It portrays six geese of three species; Red-breasted *Branta ruficollis*, White-fronted *Anser albifrons* and, I think, the greylag *A. anser* for they are larger and lack the white front and large blotches on the belly.

I gather from the literature that the White-fronted and Greylag do still visit North Africa in the winter, but the Red-breasted hardly ever does so. Delacour (*The Waterfowl of the World*. London, Country Life. Vol.I:181) says "that it may have been a more common visitor to Egypt in the past is indicated by its representation in ancient tombs."

P.M. Allen,
Librarian.

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BIRD NOTES

On the morning of 7th October, 1974, I saw from the Ngorongoro Crater Lodge, Tanzania, a mixed flock of swallows, including a small dark swallow with a white rump, which I think must be a European House Martin *Delichon urbica*.

I spent October 19th and 20th, 1974 at Thiba Fishing Camp, Embu, and each evening a pair of Afrian Hobbies *Falco cuvieri* came to the tallest trees in the clearing. The Hobbies called to each other, both in flight and on their perches, and on both evenings the two birds mated.

I did not see them do any hunting, nor did we see them during the rest of the day.

Fleur Ng'weno,
Box 42271, Nairobi.

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

With reference to Mr H.M. Gordon's note (*EANHS Bull.* 1974:149) on Klipspringers and Red-wing Starlings, I should like to remind you that a similar observation was recorded by Miss Angwin in the *Bulletin* for November 1971, p.182, and also that similar behaviour was observed by Mr H.J. Lee in September 1960 and was published in the *Journal* of January 1963, p.75 (*EANHS Bull.* 1972:50).

Priscilla M. Allen,
Box 4486, Nairobi.

PRELIMINARY NOTICE

FOURTH PAN - AFRICAN ORNITHOLOGICAL CONGRESS, KENYA, 1976

The above Congress will be held from 8 - 15 November 1976. Accomodation will be provided at the Teita Hills and Salt Lick Lodges. The cost to East Africans will be K.Shs 2350/- : this cost will provide transport to and from Nairobi; full board accomadation (including all tips and taxes), two full day mid-Congress excursions (to Taveta and Lake Jipe and to the Taita Hills and Maungu) and the end of Congress Banquet. In addition, participants will receive (before the Congress) copies of all papers to be presented and after the Congress, copies of the full Proceedings.

Details for registration and submission of papers will be given in the March 1975 *EANHS Bulletin*.

A.D. Forbes-Watson,
Secretary-General,
4th P.A.O.C,
Box 40658, Nairobi.

D.A. Turner,
Organising Secretary,
4th P.A.O.C.
Box 48019, Nairobi.

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CHECKLIST OF THE BIRDS OF THE GAMBIA

A comprehensive checklist of the birds of the Gambia is currently being prepared by Mr Jens Kirkeby and Mr Jorn Vestergaard Jensen in co-operation with the Gambian Ornithologist's Society. It is intended that this checklist will bring together all bird records, published and unpublished for the Gambia. Anyone having unpublished records for this area is requested to make these known to Jorn V. Jensen, Holtevej 13, DK-8000 Aarhus C., Denmark. All contributions will be fully acknowledged.

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SOCIETY FUNCTIONS

Monday 10th February 1975 at 5.15 p.m.: at the National Museum Hall, Nairobi. Illustrated travelogue by Mr & Mrs I.L.D. Campbell on their journey to Europe via India and Afghanistan.

15th/16th February 1975: Week-end camp on the farm of Mr Eric Lucas at Ol Kalau. The Society had a camp there last July, but it was very wet and cool, and members expressed the hope that Mr Lucas would let us go again, as it is an interesting area. It is about 160 km from Nairobi with a good road nearly all the way. The bridge that gave anxiety last time has now been repaired. (There is an account of the July camp in the *Bulletin* for August 1974). Those wishing to go should fill in the enclosed slip and return it to the Secretary, Box 44486, Nairobi, as soon as possible.

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ON CAMPS (AND FUNCTIONS GENERALLY

As we now have a good number of new members joining our camps (and also to remind older members whose children are growing up), it may be as well to recall some small rules which have been found to make life easier for all of us and to make our camps less of a bother to any who may be kind enough to lead us or to invite us to camp on their land.

Firstly will members please note that NO DOGS should be brought. Children are welcome, but please see that they do not go on the rampage or run in front of the leaders on a walk. After all, we are supposed to go on these expeditions because we are studying Natural History, not because we need a family picnic place. Then there is the ever tiresome question of rubbish disposal. Nothing at all should be left visible on the camp or picnic site. Paper can sometimes be burnt, but all non-combustible materials, and all materials not "biologically degradable", tins, bottles (and their tops), empty gas cylinders etc. must be removed. It is really not safe to bury them unless you do it deeper than most ever try to, as monkeys, hyenas, pigs, village dogs and even village children will dig up these pits in the hope of finding unconsidered trifles. It is safer to take a large bag or carton and take all of it home to throw away there. Toilet habits also need care. Sometimes on a farm a latrine is provided and we are grateful. Otherwise it is as well to remember the rule made by Moses for his people in their forty years of wandering in the desert - that everyman should carry a spade in his equipment & "cover that which cometh from him". The modern dweller in tents should carry a spade in his motor car for the same purpose, and had Moses been faced with the problem of toilet paper he would no doubt have enjoined that that too should be buried.

Before a camp please try to let the leader or the Secretary know if you decide not to come after having given in your name, or try to send a message by someone who is going, so that the leader may know not to expect you. On day trips it does not matter if you change your mind, as no list is made. But in either case will new members please introduce themselves to the leader and do not say that you are not made welcome! You are always welcome, even if the leader is too harrassed to say more than Hullo.

The questions of functions is indeed a harrassing one, and another in which we need the help of the whole Society. To arrange a trip, whether a camp or a day trip, the leader must do a reconnaisance and be prepared to give detailed directions. Often he must be prepared to go ahead of the main body and put up signs. To leave this all to one person is obviously impossible, and we have been very fortunate in securing help. But more volunteers are needed for the new year. Only 12 volunteers would be be needed to fill up the calendar. It is the same with lectures, the volunteer must contact the speaker and find out which month would suit him, then contact the Secretary so that the talk can be fitted into the programme. Here too only twelve volunteers are needed to fill the whole year. Films provide a change from lectures, and day trips as well as camps need arranging. Committee would be immensely grateful to anyone who would help in this way.

Priscilla Allen, Box 44486, Nairobi.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The A.G.M. of the Society will be held in the National Museum Hall on 10th March 1975 at 5.15 p.m. Nominations for Office Bearers and Members of Committee and notices of matters to be included in the Agenda should be sent to the Secretary, Box 44486, Nairobi before 14th February 1975.

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NEW MEMBERS - FEBRUARY 1975

Full Members:

Mr E. Bengtsson, Sonnermarksvagen 3, 43011 Traslovslage, Sweden.
Dr R. Brodey, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Box 29053, Nairobi.
Mrs A. Cook, Box 30214, Nairobi.
Mr M. Dixon, Box 30577, Nairobi.
Mr V. Fayad, Box 40525, Nairobi.
Mr J.K. Fraser, Box 30214, Nairobi.
Miss E. Heeroma, Box 41537, Nairobi.
Mr A. Ireland, Box 30017, Nairobi.
Mr R. Millang, Box 20200, Nairobi.
Mr J. McGivney, Box 30197, Nairobi.
Miss V.N. Pitt, Box 30465, Nairobi.
Mr I.H. Pattison, E.A.V.R.O., Muguga, Box 32, Kikuyu.
Rev. J.C. Riddelsdell, St. Pauls United Theological College, Private Bag, Limuru.
Mr E.C. Trump, Tana River Dev. Authority, Box 47309, Nairobi.
Mrs E. Tyrrell, Box 44365, Nairobi.

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FOR SALE

Latest model (in blue) Staedtler-Mars 9 piece Technical pen set (catalogue number 700 S9) as new. Comprising nine complete pens (with holders) 0.1, 0.2, 0.3, 0.4, 0.5, 0.6, 0.8, 1.0 and 1.2 mm, stencil attachment, 20 ml ink and three black ink cartridges. All in plastic case packed in maker's cardboard box. Cost Shs.295/- in August 1974. Price Shs. 150/- post free in Kenya.

Graeme Backhurst,
Box 29003,
Kabete.

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SOME RECENT PERIODIC LITERATURE AVAILABLE IN THE LIBRARY

Banister, K.E. 1973. A revision of the large *Barbus* (Pisces: Cyprinidae) of East and Central Africa. Studies on African Cyprinidae Pt.2. *Bull. Brit. Mus. (Nat. Hist.) Zool.* 26:2-148.

Bolton, B. 1974. A revision of the Paleotropical ant genus *Cataulacus* F. Smith (Hymenoptera: Formicidae). *Bull. Brit. Mus. (Nat. Hist.) Ent.* Suppl. 23.

" " " " 1974. A revision of the Ponerine ant genus *Plectroctena* F. Smith *Bull. Brit. Mus. (Nat. Hist.) Ent.* 30:311-338.

Bouchek, Z. 1974 A revision of the Leucospidae (Hymenoptera: Chalcidoidea) of the world. *Bull. Brit. Mus. (Nat. Hist.) Ent.* Suppl. 23.

Brazaitis, P. 1973. The identification ot living Crocodilians. *Zoologica* 58:59-101.

Brindle, A. 1973 The Dermaptera of Africa. Pt.1. *Ann. Mus. Roy. Afr. Cent.* No. 205.

Britton, P.L. & Brown, L.H. 1974. The status and breeding behaviour of East African Lari. *Ostrich* 45:63-82.

Brown, L.H. & Newman K.B. 1974. "Anting" in African passerine birds. *Ostrich* 45:194-5.

Day, M.C. 1974. A contribution to the taxonomy of the genus *Anoplius* Dufour (Hymenoptera: Pompilidae) including a revision of the paleotropical subgenus *Orientanoplius* Haupt. *Bull.Brit. Mus. (Nat. Hist.) Ent.* 30:375-404.

Ganf. G.G. 1974. Diurnal mixing and the vertical distribution of phytoplankton in a shallow equatorial lake (Lake George). *J. Ecol.* 62:611-629.

" " " 1974. Incident solar irradiance and underwater light penetration as factors controlling the chlorophyll content of a shallow equatorial lake (Lake George, Uganda) *J. Ecol.* 62: 593-609.

Greenwood, P.H. 1974. The Cichlid fishes of Lake Victoria, East Africa: the biology and evolution of a species flock. *Bull. Brit. Mus. (Nat. Hist.) Zool.* Suppl.6.

Harris, M.T. 1973. A new Acanthocephalan from an East African Galliform bird. *Bull. Brit. Mus. (Nat. Hist.) Zool.* 24:455-460.

Hartmann-Schroder, G. & Hartmann, G. 1974. Zur Kenntnis des Eulitorals der afrikanischen Westkuste ...und...Ostkuste...unter besonderer Beruchsichtigung der Polychaeten und Ostracoden. *Mitteil. a.d. Hamburgischen Zool. Mus.* Suppl. 69.

King, W.B. (ed). 1974. Pelagic studies of seabirds in the central and eastern Pacific Ocean. *Smithsonian Contrib. Zool.* No.158.

Largen, M.J. 1974. The status of the genus *Afrixalus* (Amphibia Anura Hyperoliidae) in Ethiopia, including descriptions of two new species. *Monitore Zool. Ital.* N.S. Suppl. 5:111-127.

McCelland, G.A.H. 1973. Some man-made mosquito problems in Africa and prospects for their rational solution. *Tall Timbers Conference* 5:27-41.

Quinlan, J. 1974. The nominal taxa described by R.B. Benson and their types, with a bibliography of his works (Hymenoptera) *Bull. Brit. Mus. (Nat Hist.) Ent.* 30:217-265.

Sattler, K. & Tremewan, W.G. 1974 A catologue of the family-group and genus-group names of the Coleophoridae (Lepidoptera). *Bull. Brit. Mus. (Nat. Hist.) Ent.* 30: 179-214.

Schelpe, E. 1973 Pteridophyta. *Exploration Hydrobiologique du basin du lac Bangwelo et du Luapula.* Vol.8, fasc.3.

Thompson, F.C. 1974 Descriptions of the first known Ethiopian *Myolepta* species, with a review of the subgeneric classification of *Myolepta* (Diptera: Syrphidae). *Ann. Natal Mus.* 22: 325-334.

Urban, E.K. 1974 Breeding of Sacred Ibis *Threskiornis aethiopica,* at Lake Shala, Ethiopia. *Ibis* 116: 263-277.

Von Hayek, C.M.F. 1974 On some Coleoptera Elateridae from East Africa. *Monitore Zool. Ital. N.S.* Suppl. 5: 91-99.

White, G.B. 1974 Rarest owl in trouble. *Oryx* 12: 484. (*Bubo vosseleri*)

Whitley, G.F. 1974 Wildlife study tour, 1973. Pt. 2. *Koolewong, N.S.W.* 3(2): 7-12 and 3(3): 10-15.

* * *

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The Journal Editorial Sub Committee consists of Dr Greenway, Miss Angwin, G. C. Backhurst, M. P. Clifton, A. D. Forbes-Watson and Mrs Hayes.

MEMBERSHIP

This offers you free entry to the National Museum, Nairobi; free lectures, films, slide shows or discussions every month in Nairobi; field trips and camps led by experienced guides; free use of the joint Society-National Museum Library (postal borrowing is also possible); reciprocal arrangements with the Uganda Society's Library in the Uganda Museum, Kampala; family participation: wives and children of members may attend most Society functions; one copy of the *EANHS Bulletin* every month; a copy of each *Journal* published during your period of membership; the Society controls the ringing of birds in East Africa and welcomes new ringers; the Society runs an active Nest Record Scheme; activities such as plant mapping and game counting are undertaken on a group basis. Membership rates are given at the foot of this page.

JOURNAL

The Society publishes a leading and highly respected scientific journal—*The Journal of the East Africa Natural History Society and National Museum*. Each issue consists usually of one paper, however, sometimes two or more short papers may be combined to form one number. The aim of this method of presentation is to ensure prompt publication of scientific information; a title page is issued at the end of each year so that the year's papers may be bound together. Contributions, which should be typed in double spacing on one side of the paper, with wide margins, should be sent to the Secretary, Box 44486, Nairobi, Kenya. Authors receive twenty-five reprints of their article free, provided that these are ordered at the time the proofs are returned.

E.A.N.H.S. BULLETIN

This is a duplicated monthly magazine which exists for the rapid publication of short notes, articles, letters and reviews. Contributions, which may be written in clear handwriting or typed, should be sent to the Editor (*EANHS Bulletin*), P.O. Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi, Kenya. Line drawings will be considered if they add to the value of the article, photographs cannot be published.

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Subscriptions are due 1st January. From 1st July you may join at half the yearly rate and receive publications from that date. Application forms for membership are obtainable from the Secretary, Box 44486. Nairobi.

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BULLETIN

SMITHSONIAN
MAY 12 1975
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NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Members of the Society (and non-members) are asked to follow these simple instructions when writing articles or letters for submission to the *Bulletin*. The *Bulletin* is presented each month in a duplicated format: the paper size is 20.5×23 cm (10×8 inches), line drawings can be reproduced but the area should not be more than 17.5×23 cm. Lettering on figures should preferably be in 'Letraset', neatly done in Indian ink or left blank: if the last method is followed, the lettering should be indicated on an overlaying sheet and should not be done on the figure. Figures should be prepared on good quality white writing paper and not on Bristol Board or other thick material. Whenever plants or animals are mentioned the scientific name should also be given but not in parenthesis. Trinomials should not be used unless there is good reason to do so. Author's names of species are not required.

Contributions may be typed (preferably) or written and should be sent to: G. C. Backhurst, Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi, Kenya. Receipt of contributions will be acknowledged.

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RARE AND UNUSUAL PALAEARCTIC MIGRANT BIRDS

IN CENTRAL KENYA IN 1953

INTRODUCTION

From November 1952 to February 1954, I was in Kenya serving with the then King's African Rifles. My duties involved me in frequent journeys (often on foot) and short stays at many places around and upon Mt. Kenya, in the Aberdare mountains and along the Rift Valley. Whenever possible and particularly at Lake Nakuru where I eventually became based, I made observations on Palaearctic migrant birds. In December 1953, extracts from two of my letters (to the Fair Isle Bird Observatory) describing some of the 'autumn' passage were published (Wallace 1953) and in 1955, encouraged by wider research, I drafted a paper summarising all my significant records for publication in *Ibis*. It was accepted in principle by R.E. Moreau. That it failed to appear was entirely due to my fatigue with a third draft. Much later I made two other attempts at arranging publication of at least the more important records. About 1965, I corresponded briefly with J.G. Williams, particularly asking him to see that my observations were included in any future summary of Palaearctic migrants. In 1971, I made a similar plea to K.D. Smith, then compiling the appendix of Moreau's last book (1972), and once again produced a summary of my records for him. That neither initiative succeeded was finally made evident by the complete absence of any trace of them from the recent review of the less common Palaearctic migrants in Kenya and Tanzania by Backhurst, Britton and Mann (1973). I am therefore extremely grateful to the first of these authors for offering me in January 1975 an unexpected (and thus all the more welcome) chance to remove a 21 year long frustration. This short paper takes it.

As Backhurst *et al.* rightly state, problems arise when observers already familiar with migrants in the Palaearctic region omit to support African observations with the now customary detail. I must own to such conduct in some cases. In my fifteen months in Kenya, I met only one other ornithologist and then only for two hours. I certainly had no idea that 21 years later I would be called to account. In most cases, however, I have unearthed from a full search all but one of my original logs, two sketch books, notations in my reference books and a card index, some details of the identifications and more of their circumstances. Furthermore, all the certain records listed below except the Saker Falcon *Falco cherrug* and the Sooty Falcon *F. concolor* and the Tawny Pipit *Anthus campestris* were accepted by Moreau in his close review of my first and second drafts in 1955.

SYSTEMATIC LIST

All records are for 1953 unless otherwise stated. The order and nomenclature of species follows that of Backhurst *et al.* (1973) except that I follow Christenson *et al.* (1972) in calling the Steppe Eagle *Aquila nipalensis*.

IXOBRYCHUS MINUTUS Little Bittern

Nanyuki (water dam in thorn savannah), female or immature, 4 January. No certain identification as nominate *minutus* but appearance simultaneous with those of three Palaearctic waders. Backhurst *et al.* note that five known records of nominate *minutus* in Kenya date from 25 December to February.

CICONIA NIGRA Black Stork

Near Thomson's Falls (rough grassland 10 km to S.E.), 15 in loose flock feeding on insects, 19 February. Clearly distinguished from *C. abdimii*, a large flight of which had occurred at Nanyuki on 28 November 1952.

PLATALEA LEUCORODIA European Spoonbill

Nanyuki (water dam in farmland), 7 March; Lake Naivasha, five, near Gilgil, eight in flock flying S., 12 October. First merely noted as 'European' in area where *P. alba* was occasional vagrant; no doubts about Naivasha party, identified by comparison to one *P. alba* nearby, but last birds merely noted as "8 more".

[*AQUILA HELIACA* Imperial Eagle

Nanyuki flying S., 25 January. Came as close as 50 m; huge, very dark with no discernable plumage pattern on underside; silhouettes of bird diving and in level flight showing horizontal wingset (= *A. heliaca* or *nipalensis*, not *A. clanga* or *pomarina*), protruding head, short innermost secondaries and rather long tail (= *A. heliaca*, not *nipalensis*). Since this delayed identification has been made only in the light of the work of Harkness and Murdoch (1971) and Christensen *et al.* (1972), it seems wise to regard the record as probable rather than certain.]

FALCO CHERRUG Saker

Nanyuki, 9 March; Meru 29 March; Lake Nakuru (Lion Hill), 29 November. First appeared with Lesser Kestrels *Falco naumanni* and Montagu's Harrier *Circus pygargus*; second, clearly remembered as large, brown with strikingly pale head, seen during marked northward passage of Black Kites *Milvus migrans* and third appeared during thin passage of Lesser Kestrels. My first identification of the species but by 1953, I had known the Peregrine *F. peregrinus* well for five years and had seen Lanner *F. biarmicus* near Nairobi on 24 November 1952. Chronologically the second, third and fourth records for Kenya but now covered by at least five similarly dated recent records (Backhurst *et al.*).

FALCO CONCOLOR Sooty Falcon

Naro Moru (highland forest edge), adult, 3 March. With three African Hobbies *F. cuvieri*, all feeding on flying insects for *c.* 20 minutes before dusk; noted as reminiscent of dark phase Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis* (indicating uniform grey plumage and different flight action from the Grey Kestrel *F. ardosiaceus*, which I did not see in Kenya but have since in Nigeria.

CHARADRIUS ALEXANDRINUS Kentish Plover

Lake Nakuru, immature, 31 October. The notes seen by Moreau (with additional words in brackets) read: 'The bird was in company with several White-fronted Sand Plovers *C. marginatus*, both adult and immature, and Ringed Plovers *C. hiaticula* (actually feeding among immatures of this species, ex log). An accurate comparison was possible. The bird's posture and movements were far more delicate than those of the others, the difference in character (from *C. hiaticula*) being one that I had previously noted in Europe. (This difference in character, from both species, was also noted when once again I was able to compare all three in Nigeria in 1970-71). The legs and feet were dark grey. The upperparts were greyer than those of *C. marginatus*. The bird also appeared slightly bigger than that species, standing higher Moreau commented: 'I think I should omit this. I am prepared to believe you but future compilers will be doubtful and bothered by the record. A case where a specimen is needed'. Backhurst (*in litt.*) has also advised caution, pointing to the possibility of confusion with *C. leschenaultii* and *mongolus* (the Greater and Mongolian Sand Plovers). My confidence in the identification has never wavered. The observation was close and lengthy and the comparison checked against Mackworth-Praed and Grant (1952) which I had just acquired and which listed as diagnostic of *C. alexandrinus* the very differences from *C. marginatus* that I had noted prior to reference.

Backhurst (*in litt.*) has also pointed out the (to me surprising) absence of *C. marginatus* from Lake Nakuru in recent years. A note on their presence there in 1953 and 1954 forms an appendix to this paper.

CHARADRIUS DUBIUS Little Ringed Plover

Lake Naivasha, 12 October. With *C. hiaticula*. By 1953, I had been familiar with the species for three years (in southern England).

GLAREOLA NORDMANNI Black-winged Pratincole

Lake Naivasha, three adults and one immature, 12 October. In flight and on the ground at close range, the black underwings seen (and double checked) in direct sunlight. My first identification of the species but I had seen the Pratincole *G. pratincola* in the Sudan and near Nairobi in November 1952. This record of *G. nordmanni* antedates the only known Kenyan occurrence which interestingly is dated identically (Mann 1971).

[*STERNA HIRUNDO* Common Tern

Lake Elmenteita, 20 February. In company with White-winged Black Terns *S. leucoptera*; originally logged as this species (with which I had been familiar for seven years) but later, occurrence considered too unlikely, leading to assumption from available distribution data that it had been a Gull-billed Tern *S. nilotica*. When however I first saw that species at Lake Nakuru (in August), I logged not only the stout appearance of their bills but also their rather gull-like character. Clearly the Elmenteita form was of another species and given that *S. hirundo* has now been seen in the Rift, my lack of faith in the original identification is doubly unfortunate. Clearly it cannot be regarded as certain.]

STERNA NIGRA Black Tern

Lake Nakuru, 23 September. Closely associated with one *S. leucoptera*, both temporarily 'bonded' with a pack of waders; in flight and at rest at close range for *c.* 10 minutes. This species is quite exceptional inland in Central Africa (Dowsett 1968, Wallace 1973) but a water-colour sketch of its foreparts shows a rather long thin bill, extensive black on crown and rear cheeks and the diagnostic black chest smudges. Prior to this occasion, I had seen *S. nigra* four times and in this context, it is particularly significant that I had watched a flock of *c.* 30 over the Nile near Khartoum, Sudan on 21 November 1952. The second record for Kenya (cf. Backhurst *et al.*).

CALIDRIS ALPINA Dunlin

Lake Nakuru, 24 October. With Little Stints *C. minuta*, having appeared during marked arrival of six sympatric Palaearctic waders. By 1953, I had been fully familiar with *C. alpina* (in all plumages) for seven years and it never occurred to me to take notes upon this individual. It is recorded in my log with nothing more than an exclamation of surprise and in my card index (and Wallace 1953) with simple conviction. As Backhurst *et al.* point out in their discussion of other inland records in East Africa, even expert observers make mistakes when suddenly transported to the light values of another continent. However it is clear from comments in my 1952 log that I had become aware of the 'Dunlin for Stint' risk eleven months before the date of this record. My confidence in the identification is total.

CALIDRIS TEMMINCKII Temminck's Stint

Lake Nakuru, two, 2 September. First identified by trilling call, second a hurt bird caught and found to have totally white outer tail feathers that are unique to this species and completely eliminate the Long-toed Stint *C. subminuta* (Wallace 1974). My logs contain other entries, both at Lake Nakuru (usually one or two, but twice 30 to 40, including a flock of 20 from 9 September to 29 November) and at Lake Naivasha (two on 12 October). However, it is clear from both of my logs and later card index summaries that my confidence in the identifications wavered on and after 24 October and had done earlier in the case of some odd-looking stints at Lake Elmenteita on 20 February. I have experienced similar difficulty with 'winter' stint identifications recently in Nigeria and since *C. subminuta*, a readily confusable congener has been proved to visit Kenya (Backhurst and Britton 1969), it seems wise to add only the record of 2 September to those listed by Backhurst *et al.*

OENANTHE HISPANICA Black-eared Wheatear

Nanyuki (interface of grass and thorn savannah), immatures, not Pied Wheatears *O. pleschanka* and probably this species, 5 December 1952; male probably first summer and certainly *hispanica*, 5 April. Latter appeared during marked passage of Palaearctic night migrants and on same day as one Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*. The notes seen on it by Moreau (with additional words in brackets) read: "I was first attracted by its habit of catching insects from a post or a stone, more in the manner of a flycatcher . . . it appeared similar in wing and tail pattern to *O. pleschenka* (which wintered locally).

Otherwise there were obvious differences from that species in the colour of the mantle which was light sandy-buff and in the distribution of the black on the throat, the area being less extensive than in *pleschanka* (with) a clear division at the shoulder and no shading of the black throat patch into the mantle . . . only a slight suggestion of a brown wash on the crown. Overall it was a more striking bird than *pleschanka* (of which the last individuals had been seen a week earlier)". I still have sketches of both birds and also of my first two seen at Khartoum, Sudan on 21 November 1952. Moreau accepted the April bird without comment and it is the first for Kenya and East Africa south of Eritrea (Moreau 1972). However, Moreau indicates that the complete winter range of this chat is still unknown and judging by its winter habitat in northern Nigeria, it could be suited by that in northern Kenya.

ANTHUS CAMPESTRIS Tawny Pipit

Athi Plains near Nairobi, 23 November 1952. Feeding among many Wheatears *Oenanthe oenanthe*; log entry indicates initial confusion with and later clear separation from *A. vaalensis* and another pipit, probably Richard's Pipit *A. novaeseelandiae*, closely observed on previous and same day. I had seen two previously, one near Khartoum, Sudan only two days before. The first November record for Kenya (cf. Backhurst *et al.*).

LANIUS SENATOR Woodchat Shrike

Simba creek, Naibor, south of Loldaiga mountains (thorn savannah near cultivation), 29 April. Observed from *c.* 30 m, logged as "probably adult male" appearing at end of marked passage of Lesser Grey *L. minor* and Red-backed Shrikes *L. collurio*. The only record for Central Kenya. (cf. Backhurst *et al.*).

HIPPOLAIS ICTERINA Icterine Warbler

Kisima, near Morania, two 1 April. With 20 Willow Warblers *Phylloscopus trochilus*. Another record of easterly orientated spring passage in Kenya (cf. Backhurst *et al.*).

PHYLLOSCOPUS COLLYBITA Chiffchaff

Meru (forest edge with pool, *c.* 1950 m), one very pale morph, 3 April; Timau (highland forest gallery with stream, *c.* 2850 m), three, 11 April. All in song, appearing during marked passage of seven other Palaearctic warblers on both sides of Mt. Kenya.

PHYLLOSCOPUS SIBILATRIX Wood Warbler

Naro Moru (canopy of forest gallery over stream, *c.* 2250 m), 22 February. Appeared with three other Palaearctic warblers including *P. trochilus*.

PHOENICURUS PHOENICURUS Redstart

Nanyuki, female, 10 March, male 5 April. These birds had reached the equator and the latter is the latest spring record for Kenya (cf. Backhurst *et al.*). Its simultaneous arrival with an extra-limital *Oenanthe hispanica* is noteworthy; both could well have wintered further south.

LOCALITIES AND HABITATS

All the records listed for Lake Nakuru were obtained at or near an area of permanent spring water, with surrounding outfall lagoons and various marsh and thorn communities, in the north-east sector of the normal shoreline (see also Appendix). Those listed for Lake Naivasha all came from a large area of shallow water with partly tilled mud margins and incomplete papyrus surround south of the main lake.

COMMENT

In 1952 to 1954, many of the above records were exceptional though at the time I did not always realise them as such, being dependant for detailed references on an occasional sight of Jackson (1938) and van Someren (1931). Given the relatively intensive observations of recent and current Kenya observers, most of the records fall into a more balanced perspective. Some, e.g. those of *Falco cherrug* and *Hippolais icterina*, fit closely to now emergent patterns of occurrence. Only those of *Charadris alexandrinus*, *Caladris alpina* and *Oenanthe hispanica* remain to be repeated.

Even so the incidence of rare migrants in the Rift Valley in the 1953 'autumn' still appears remarkably high. Four wetland species, normally occurring as solitary vagrants' were present in parties or flocks at Lake Naivasha on 12 October and the five vagrants found at Lake Nakuru were the product of only 50 hours of observation on 21 days. It should be noted however, that the latter were made easy to find (and identify) by the state of the habitat. Drought was concentrating all wetland birds into a small area and most species were uncannily tame (by European standards).

It is probable that the weather influenced their arrival in a wider context. The arrival of two *Caladris temminckii* at Lake Nakuru on 2 September followed immediately upon a wind shift from the prevailing S.S.E. breeze to a strong N. blow and the remarkable concentration of unusual species at Lake Naivasha on 12 October was found immediately after three days of unusually bad weather which cleared on the morning of my visit. These may be no more than coincidences but I find them significant in the light of similar events experienced in south-west Nigeria in recent years. At Lagos (4.S) in the winter of 1970/71. an unusually persistent period of *harmattan* produced a long series of Palaearctic vagrants, notably in this context three *Anas* including Teal *A. crecca* and Spotted Crake *Porzana porzana* which had added on average 6.S to their normal winter bounds in West Africa. Rain there often caused both marked movements and concentrations of Palaearctic waders. Such cause and effect may also be correlated in the not dissimilar latitudes of northern and central Kenya, the more so since there is no rain forest 'barrier' beyond 30.E.

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APPENDIX

WHITE - FRONTED SANDPLOVERS *CHARADRIUS MARGINATUS*

AT LAKE NAKURU IN 1953 - 54

On 4 August, from that date to 31 October and again from 9 December to early February 1954, *Charadrius marginatus* was present at Lake Nakuru. Its numbers varied from 5 - 10 in August, 10 - 15 in September, up to 14 and a handful in December, January and February. The species was initially new to me but identification was not a problem since the birds were closely associating with *C. pecuarius* and *tricollaris* and occasionally in company with *C. hiaticula* and once *C. alexandrinus*. The three African species, particularly *C. marginatus* and *pecuarius*, were normally seen on dried mud near lagoons and all three had birds of the year with them. At least in the case of *pecuarius*, the latters' plumage and weak flight (on 4 August) indicated recent fledgling.

Initially I assumed that all three African plovers and the larger *Vanellus armatus* were resident. In late October however, the combination of renewed drought and a peak presence of Palaearctic waders, notably 700 Little Stints *Calidris minuta* and 650 Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*, apparently displaced them. On 29 November, none of the three small species was seen. On 9 December, the numbers of Palaearctic waders had collapsed and the African plovers had reappeared.

This series of records of *C. marginatus* at Lake Nakuru is without precedent on recent cover (G.C. Backhurst, *in litt.*). Could it have stemmed from the unusually arid state of the habitat in 1953? When I first saw the lake in February, it was a dust bowl. In early August, it had filled sufficiently to attract flamingoes but was almost dry again by the 28th. Rain did not refill the centre until mid-September and at no time did the water level even approach the normal shoreline. It seems likely that a small population of *C. marginatus* found the temporary ecology to be in their favour and proceeded to exploit it. Such opportunistic behaviour is typical of *C leschenaultii* and several other waders (I.J. Ferguson-Lees and Wallace, in prep.).

D.I.M. Wallace, 9 Woodhill Rise, Heads Lane, Hessle, Hull HU13 OHZ. U.K.

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THE SHINING - BLUE KINGFISHER *ALCEDO QUADRIBRACHYS* IN KENYA

At about 10.00 h on 20th November, 1974 a friend and I stopped to look for birds at a small stream in the Kakamega Forest area, Western Kenya. Most of the original forest had been cleared, but some trees remained. The road works had drowned the stream - we saw a kingfisher in a small tree on the opposite side of this small dam.

In size it was about that of the European Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*, familiar to me in Spain and Sweden. The underside was chestnut-red (deeper in colour than *atthis*;) the crown, nape and sides of the face were deep blue; there was a pure white chin contrasting with the rest of the underparts and there were conspicuous white ear-patches. The bill was long and black, the feet red. The back was not seen.

When we tried to get a closer view it flew off and was not seen again. A colour photograph was taken with a 400 mm lens, copies of which are deposited in the National Museum, Nairobi.

Examination of the skins of the Shining-blue Kingfisher *A. quadribrachys* in the museum's collection leaves us in no doubt that the bird we saw in Kakamega Forest was of that species. This is confirmed by Mr A.D. Forbes-Watson, who tells us that this is the first record from Kenya. With all the ornithological work done in Kakamega Forest it is surprising that such a conspicuous bird had been previously overlooked, but Mr Forbes-Watson tells us that in Liberia, though it is quite common on forest streams, it is very seldom seen.

Evert Bengtsson, Sönnermarksvägen 3, 43011 Träslövsläge, Sweden.

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OBSERVATIONS ON THE SHINING - BLUE KINGFISHER *ALCEDO QUADRIBRACHYS* ON THE LUGUSIDA RIVER, KAKAMEGA FOREST

The sighting of a Shining-blue Kingfisher on the Lugusida River, a tributary of the Lusumu River, in Kakamega Forest (Bengtsson, 1975) prompted the authors of this note to arrange several visits to the forest during the period 19th January 1975 - 27th January 1975 inclusive, for the purpose of re-locating the bird and investigating other streams in the Kakamega Forest area for this species.

On 19th January 1975, a mist-net was erected on the Kakamega - Vihiga road and a Shining-blue Kinfisher was caught in the net even before the net was fully erected. The bird was ringed and photographed in the hand. It was an adult in moult of the sub-species *guentheri* and had the following measurements:

Weight 30.9 g; Wing 80 mm; Bill-length 48.2 mm; Bill-width 8.2 mm

After being released tha bird flew into the tree canopy but was seen later in the morning flying downstream and was seen hunting over the same section of the river described by Bengtsson. It was seen flying back upstream to the capture point at about 18.40 h but on this occasion it passed over the mist-nets placed across the stream. The bird did not call and was clearly going to roost.

B.S.M., who has made a study of the genus *Alcedo*, has specially looked for this species in Western Kenya over the past two years without previous success but the discovery of the Logusida River bird now clearly raises the possibility of a small breeding population that has hitherto been overlooked. During the period spent in Kakamega Forest several other rivers draining the forest were inspected. In the time available sections of the Ikuyua River, the Kidia River, the Kabkalet River and a major un-named tributary of the Lugusida downstream of the capture site were walked. On the Ikuywa River which is the only river inspected in the Yala River rather than in the Lusumu River catchment, approximately four miles (*c.* 6.5 km) surrounded by undisturbed indigenous rain forest were walked and two mist-nets were erected on upstream tributaries as from 25th-26th January; three stream miles (*c.* 5 km) of the Kidia River were closely walked, also deep within indegenous forest, and five hour constant watching sessions which were repeated over two days, were kept on the river at the point where cultivation and forest-edge meet. Shorter watches were kept at a similar forest-edge location on the Kabkalet River. On the final day in the area i.e. 27th January 1975, several points on the Lugusida River were visited; here all the sections inspected were bordered by recently-cleared rain forest that had not yet been re-planted with soft-wood exotics. These sections were both upstream and downstream of the Kakamega - Vihiga road.

On 27th January what was almost certainly the same individual Shining-blue Kingfisher was seen again at 15.00h within a few metres of the fishing area on the Lugusida River where the bird was seen on 19th January. When the bird flew off it gave an alarm call - a loud shrill, repeated three times in rapid sequence - which to B.S.M's ears was identical to the call of the European Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*. However, on all other streams mentioned in the last paragraph the results were negative.

The present evidence, which is outlined above, suggests that the Lugusida River bird is a vagrant. Singletons of the closely allied Half-collared Kingfisher *Alcedo semitorquata* have been observed at Lake Nakuru and on the Uaso Nyiro River near Archer's Post, considerable distances away from its only known Kenyan breeding locality near Taveta (B.S.M. in prep.) In fact, assuming that no other un-recorded breeding localities exist, they represent movements much greater than the distance between Kakamega Forest and the Shining-blue Kingfisher's nearest breeding locality in Uganda. Moreover, in Zaire the species is not always confined to deep forest, as seems to be strictly the case for the White-bellied Kingfisher *Alcedo leucogaster* (Freidmann, 1969), for Chapin (1939) records the Shining-blue Kingfisher, on occasions, moving into extensive papyrus swamps.

One reason B.S.M. has considered in the past for the lack of any records of *Alcedo quadribrachys* in Western Kenya is the high turbidity of most of the atreams for much of the year; many of the permanent watercourses in Kakamega forest have their headwaters from the Nandi Escarpment rather than within Kakamega Forest and are frequently highly turbid, although during the survey period, at a time of very dry weather, all the streams inspected had a clarity greater than 30 cm. However, the Lugusida River and some of the tributaries to Kidia River were found to actually rise within Kakamega Forest itself and should be relatively silt-free for most of the year. In addition, fish (*Barbus* sp.) and tadpoles were at a density that one would have thought sufficient to maintain a small population of Shining-blue Kingfishers. A further, more exhaustive survey is still, therefore considered necessary to determine if a resident population exists and will be undertaken at a future date.

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B.S. Meadows, Box 30521, Nairobi.
C.F. Mann, Box 337, Kapsabet.
D. Cape, Box 1, Nandi Hills.

STONEFISH

I should like to commend A.J. Davies on the sound description and record of his observations on the stonefish (*EANHS Bulletin* 1975: 16) (it would have been helpful to have included a record of the locality).

Miss Allen's Addendum and Davies' interesting note call for a brief comment on the probable species and on stonefish in general.

According to Smith (*The Sea Fishes of Southern Africa*, 5th Edition, Second Impression, 1970) stonefishes belong to the family Synanciidae, are closely related to the Scorpion fishes (Scorpaenidae) and are included, with one or two more families, in the order Cataphracti (the mail-cheeked fishes). Marshall (*Tropical Fishes of the Great Barrier Reef*, 1966) apparently lumps them all into the Scorpaenidae. In any event, all have a more or less pronounced bony ridge across the cheek, and all have poisonous dorsal fin spines which can inflict painful and in at least two species, dangerous wounds.

In spite of Mollison's (*Kenya's Coast : An Illustrated Guide*, 1971) statement that there is considerable doubt as to exactly what a stonefish is, it seems that only two species of stonefish *in sensu stricto* inhabit the Indian Ocean.

The common stonefish is *Synanceichthys verrucosus* (Block-Schneider 1801). Smith (*Ichthyological Bulletin* No.18, Department of Ichthyology, Rhodes University, 1958) collected, and confirmed the identity of *S. verrucosus* from several areas along the central and northern Mozambique coast, Zanzibar, Shimoni, Seychelles and Aldabra. I have examined specimens of this species taken at Kilifi and Diani.

The second species, *Synanceja horrida* (Linnaeus 1758), has not been recorded by Smith in any of his extensive surveys of the western Indian Ocean. He gives the distribution of *S. horrida* as being from India eastwards, with two records from Reunion (1863 and 1935) and single records from Borbonia (1874) and Madagascar (1891). Smith maintains that in the absence of detailed descriptions of these records, there is no evidence that they are not, in fact, based on specimens of *S verrucosus*. Marshall (*loc. cit.*) gives *S. horrida* as the species of stonefish commonly occurring off Queensland: he does not mention *S. verrucosus*.

The two species are very similar; the chief difference seems to be the presence or absence of teeth on the vomer, a dentigerous bone in the roof of the mouth. *S. verrucosus* does not have teeth on the vomer; *S. horrida* does.

There is only one East African species of fish which may be confused with the stonefish, which it resembles superficially, and in habitat preference and behaviour. This is *Scorpaenopsis gibbosa* (Scorpaenidae). If in doubt, first check for the presence or absence of scales: *Scorpaenopsis* has scales, whereas the stonefish does not. A count should also be made of the number of spines and rays in the *dorsal fin*. In *Synanceichthys*, there are 13 spines followed by 6 soft rays, written in shorthand as D XIII 6; in *Scorpaenopsis* there are 12 spines and 9 rays (D XII 9). The venom of *Scorpaenopsis* is apparently not as toxic as that of the stonefish.

To summarise, available records indicate that the common stonefish found along the Kenya coast is *Synanceichthys verrucosus*; there are no records of *Synanceja horrida* from the African coast, but apparently this species is common from India eastwards and along the Great Barrier Reef of Australia. In our waters, it is possible to confuse the stonefish with a species of scorpion fish *Scorpaenopsis gibbosa*, but the presence or absence of scales and a count of the dorsal fin spines and rays (*EXERCISING THE GREATEST POSSIBLE CARE*) should confirm the identity without difficulty.

Stonefish do not attain a great size. A Kilifi Creek specimen measured 295 mm and this must be close to the maximum length (Smith records 1 ft.). I dissected out the dorsal spines of this particular specimen. They were up to 35 mm in length, were deeply grooved laterally, and had two large poison sacs, each containing approximately 0.05 ml of the neurotoxic venom, and each surrounded by strong, tough musculature. The stonefish erects these spines as an aggressive display. Presumably, when trodden on, strong muscular contractions inject large quantities of venom into the victim.

In spite of the dread this fish holds in literature, I have not heard of any fatality resulting from wounds inflicted by a stonefish in Kenya. Wounds are, however, exceedingly unpleasant and painful, and records of fatalities exist in other areas.

Stonefish are among the most perfectly adapted and successful of tropical reef fish. Their camouflage is flawless, and they are virtually invisible against their background. Non-aggressive (fortunately) and seemingly sluggish, they lie motionless and await their prey to swim within striking distance, when the prey is engulfed in a sudden movement. One distended specimen examined by Smith contained no less than 10 freshly ingested damsel and goby fish.

K.R. Bock, E.A.A.F.R.O., Box 30148, Nairobi.

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NEST RECORD SCHEME

PLEASE would contributors send in their cards for 1974 as soon as possible.

ALSO any previous notes on breeding birds in East Africa found in old notebooks (however ancient or scanty - as long as accompanied by date and locality) would be very welcome. If members do not have Nest Record cards (and dont want to be bothered with them for only a few records) I am willing to transfer any observations sent to me onto cards and incorporate them in the Nest Record Scheme filing system.

NEW contributors are always needed and contributions from temporary residents and visitors to East Africa, as well as members, are appreciated.

I would like, yet again, to make a special PLEA to those with full notebooks, going back many years, who have 'not yet got round to it'.

Lastly, may I remind members that the data collected by the E.A.N.H.S. Nest Record Scheme are available to EVERYONE and during 1974 I have sent data to several researchers in different countries. YOUR records are being used but many more are needed. If you can, PLEASE HELP.

Hazel Britton, Nest Record Scheme Organiser,
Shimo-la-tewa School, Box 90163, Mombasa, Kenya.

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A NATURAL HISTORY SECTION IN THE FORT JESUS MUSEUM LIBRARY

A reference library which is open to interested members of the public exists already in Fort Jesus Museum. While the primary purpose of the library is to preserve and make available works dealing with the history, archaeology and related subjects its scope is being extended to include Natural History.

It is hoped that the library will soon be air conditioned which is most important for the preservation of books in the coastal climate. It is thought that the privilege of being able to use free of charge such a library in Mombasa will be valuable to members of the E.A.N.H.S. living on or visiting the coast and it is hoped that members of the Society who may from time to time have suitable books at their disposal (for instance when someone leaves the country or dies) may consider presenting them to the Fort Jesus Library.

Any correspondence on this subject should be addressed to Mr H. Sassoon, Curator, Fort Jesus Museum, Box 82412, Mombasa, Kenya.

J.B. Gillett, Box 45166, Nairobi.

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CAMP AT FALLODON FARM OL KALOU. 15th - 16th FEBRUARY 1975

Once again Professor Lucas was host to a very enjoyable camp on his farm. There were only 17 encampments, and 45 - 50 people, including children and babies, who behaved very well. The tents were pitched along a stretch of the Malawa river which runs along the edge of the farm. The conditions were the exact opposite of those of the previous camp held last August, when it rained heavily. This time it was very dry, with no green grass and very few flowers. But many birds were seen, and it seems that they were concentrated along the river because of the drought. The list of birds identified reached nearly 60. These included the Red-breasted Wryneck *Jynx ruficollis*, Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone viridis*, Cinnamon-chested Bee-eater *Merops oreobates*, the Giant Kingfisher *Ceryle maxima*, Woodpeckers and a Secretary Bird *Sagittarius serpeninus*. A Black-headed Bush Shrike *Tchagra senegala* was singing his nice song in the camp. The tamest birds were the Robin Chats *Cossypha caffra* and the White-eyed Slaty Flycatchers *Melanaeornis choclatina*, which came very close to the tents..

Campers began to arrive on Saturday morning, and by tea time most of the camps were set up. After tea, Professor Lucas led a walk up the river on the far side. It was a most enjoyable walk along grassy tracks under beautiful big trees. Thorn trees, Olive trees and among the most striking, Hagenia (Ki. Mumonao), lovely spreading trees reminiscent of Ash, leaning over the river and covered with ferns. The track crossed the river on a log bridge, and higher up on stepping stones.

After recovering from the exertion of the walk, campers brought their drinks and sat round a splendid camp fire in a very friendly spirit. Even a bottle of Champagne was opened! There was a clear first quarter moon, and bright stars. The interesting juxtaposition of Venus and Jupiter was observed. On Sunday morning Professor Lucas again led a walk, this time down the river. Again it was in lovely walking conditions, and many birds were seen.

Altogether a successful and enjoyable camp.

Daphne Collins.

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PUBLICITY - CAR STICKERS AND POSTERS

Attractive E.A.N.H.S. car stickers (pressure type for fitting on the inside of windows) will be available at Sh.2/- each. A supply should arrive in time for the A.G.M. where members will be able to buy them. Members ordering by post should send Sh.2/- (preferably in mint E.A. Postage stamps) for each sticker required - the stickers will be sent out with the next issue of the *Bulletin* to save extra postage.

The Society is also having posters printed and these should be on display at the A.G.M. If you can stick one up where potential new members will see it, please ask the Secretary for a copy.

An application for membership is enclosed with this issue; please try and get at least one new member to join.

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WORLD WILDLIFE FUND GALA FILM SHOW

The World Wildlife Fund is presenting a Gala performance of Alan Root's "Year of the Wildebeeste" together with Ian Douglas-Hamilton's "Living with Elephants" on March 28th at 9 p.m. and on March 29th at 5 p.m. and 9 p.m. at the National Theatre. Booking at the Theatre.

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SOCIETY FUNCTIONS

Monday, 10th March 1975 at 5.15 p.m.: At the National Museum Hall, Nairobi. Annual General Meeting. Followed by the film "Winged World", very kindly donated by the Wildlife Clubs of Kenya.

Thursday, 6th March 1975 at 5.15 p.m.: At the National Museum Hall, Nairobi. A joint programme with the National Museum Society: Dr Herman Rigksen will lecture on "The Oranutang - A Vanishing Ape of the Tropical Rain Forest". The lecture will be accompanied by slides.

Sunday 23rd March 1975: Bird Walk for beginers led by Mrs Fleur Ng'weno. Meet at the Museum at 9 a.m. Morning only.

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NEW MEMBERS - MARCH 1975

Full Members:

Mr P. Agland, 4 Plover Close, Kempshott Lane, Basingstoke, Hants, U.K.
Mrs P.B. Allen, Box 41190, Nairobi.
Mr T.J. Andrews, Box 40058, Nairobi.
Miss A.J. Ashton, Box 109, Kikuyu, Kenya.
Mrs M. Batey, Box 47452, Nairobi.
Miss H.L. Ensering, Med. Res. Centre, Box 20752, Nairobi.
Dr J. Frazier, c/o E.A. Wildlife Society, Box 20110, Nairobi.
Miss H.B. Guttery, Box 23080, Nairobi.
Mr R. Mae Melnick, Nat. Mus. of Kenya, Box 40658, Nairobi.
Mr T. Meltzer, c/o Dept. Elec. Engineering, Box 30197, Nairobi.
Mr T. Meyer, Box 45568, Nairobi.
Miss M.M. van Rens, Box 20752, Nairobi.
Mr D.K. Richards, c/o Safari Air Services Ltd., Box 41951, Nairobi.
Miss M. Ridley, Box 41303, Nairobi.
Mr T.G. Schwan, Baharini Wildlife Sanctuary, Box 33, Nakuru, Kenya.
Miss A.C. Sjoerdsma, Box 20752, Nairobi.
Mr Staffan, Widstrand, Toppvagen 84, S-175 40 JARFALLA, Sweden.
Mr T.J.G. Uttien, Box 1, Nandi Hills, Kenya.
Miss J.E. Vernooij, Box 20752, Nairobi.
Miss S.M. Watson, Box 48311, Nairobi.

Institutional Member:

I.C.I.P.E., Box 30772, Nairobi.

Mr P. Branner, Box 40412, Nairobi joined as a full member in January 1975, his name was inadvertantly omitted from the list of new members published in that issue of the *Bulletin*, for which we apologise.

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THE EAST AFRICA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Chairman: J. S. Karmali

Vice Chairman: Mrs J. Hayes

Editor, Jl E. Africa nat. Hist. Soc. Nat. Mus.: Dr P. J. Greenway O.B.E.

Secretary: Mrs D. Collins

Librarian: Miss P. M. Allen

Treasurer: M. P. Clifton

Executive Committee (in addition to the above): Miss D. Angwin; G. C. Backhurst (*Ringing Organizer* and *Editor EANHS Bulletin*); Mrs A. L. Campbell; A. D. Forbes-Watson; R. E. F. Leakey; E. T. Monks; N. Myers.

Co-opted Members: Mrs H. A. Britton (*Nest Record Scheme Organizer*); N. Chumo; A. Duff-MacKay; D. Mbuvi; T. D. Morris; Mrs L. Ndegwa; Mrs F. Ng'weno; Mrs I. Preston.

The Journal Editorial Sub Committee consists of Dr Greenway, Miss Angwin, G. C. Backhurst, M. P. Clifton, A. D. Forbes-Watson and Mrs Hayes.

MEMBERSHIP

This offers you free entry to the National Museum, Nairobi; free lectures, films, slide shows or discussions every month in Nairobi; field trips and camps led by experienced guides; free use of the joint Society-National Museum Library (postal borrowing is also possible); reciprocal arrangements with the Uganda Society's Library in the Uganda Museum, Kampala; family participation: wives and children of members may attend most Society functions; one copy of the *EANHS Bulletin* every month; a copy of each *Journal* published during your period of membership; the Society controls the ringing of birds in East Africa and welcomes new ringers; the Society runs an active Nest Record Scheme; activities such as plant mapping and game counting are undertaken on a group basis. Membership rates are given at the foot of this page.

JOURNAL

The Society publishes a leading and highly respected scientific journal—*The Journal of the East Africa Natural History Society and National Museum.* Each issue consists usually of one paper, however, sometimes two or more short papers may be combined to form one number. The aim of this method of presentation is to ensure prompt publication of scientific information; a title page is issued at the end of each year so that the year's papers may be bound together. Contributions, which should be typed in double spacing on one side of the paper, with wide margins, should be sent to the Secretary, Box 44486, Nairobi, Kenya. Authors receive twenty-five reprints of their article free, provided that these are ordered at the time the proofs are returned.

E.A.N.H.S. BULLETIN

This is a duplicated monthly magazine which exists for the rapid publication of short notes, articles, letters and reviews. Contributions, which may be written in clear handwriting or typed, should be sent to the Editor (*EANHS Bulletin*), P.O. Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi, Kenya. Line drawings will be considered if they add to the value of the article, photographs cannot be published.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Life	One payment: K shs.	500/-
Institutional (schools, libraries) .	annual payment: K shs.	50/-
Full	annual payment: K shs.	50/-
Junior (full-time student, no *Journal* supplied) . . .	annual payment: K shs.	10/-

Subscriptions are due 1st January. From 1st July you may join at half the yearly rate and receive publications from that date. Application forms for membership are obtainable from the Secretary, Box 44486. Nairobi.

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BULLETIN

SMITHSONIAN
SEP 8 1975
LIBRARIES

A monthly publication of the East Africa Natural History Society, Box 44486, Nairobi, Kenya. Price 2 shillings

NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Members of the Society (and non-members) are asked to follow these simple instructions when writing articles or letters for submission to the *Bulletin*. The *Bulletin* is presented each month in a duplicated format: the paper size is 20.5×23 cm (10×8 inches), line drawings can be reproduced but the area should not be more than 17.5×23 cm. Lettering on figures should preferably be in 'Letraset', neatly done in Indian ink or left blank: if the last method is followed, the lettering should be indicated on an overlaying sheet and should *not* be done on the figure. Figures should be prepared on good quality white writing paper and not on Bristol Board or other thick material. Whenever plants or animals are mentioned the scientific name should also be given but not in parenthesis. Trinomials should not be used unless there is good reason to do so. Author's names of species are not required.

Contributions may be typed (preferably) or written clearly and should be sent to: G. C. Backhurst, Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi, Kenya. Receipt of contributions will be acknowledged.

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ALBINO LESSER KESTREL *FALCO NAUMANNI* ON KAPITI PLAINS

On 7th February 1975, while driving through the Kapiti Plains between Athi River and Kajiado, we saw a small, very pale falcon perched on a telegraph wire. Our description is as follows:

"Very pale grey on head with dark eye, buff-brown markings on back and wings, dark sub-terminal bar on tail, rest of plumage *entirely white.*"

We had already seen Greater Kestrel *Falco rupicoloides* and European Kestrel *F. tinnunculus* earlier during the day and later saw Lesser Kestrels *F. naumanni*. C.F.M. and B.S.M. have considerable field experience of the latter species, and based on size and flight they strongly believe the bird could only have been a partial-albino Lesser Kestrel.

C.F. Mann, Box 337, Kapsabet, Kenya.
B.S. Meadows, Box 30521, Nairobi.
D. Cape, Box 1, Nandi Hills, Kenya.

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UNCOMMON MIGRANTS ON MAU NAROK

The following three species listed as uncommon by Backhurst, Britton & M Mann (1973) have been seen lately on Mau Narok.

A male and immature Amur Falcon (Eastern Red-footed Falcon) *Falco amurensis* were seen by me on 14th December 1974 flying into a stiff N.E. wind in the late evening. They settled in a windbreak of pine trees and I was able to observe them at close quarters for 18 minutes.

On 20th December 1974 an adult male Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca* was seen by Mr Harry Remnant together with some English ornithologists on a bird safari, in his garden on Cobb Farm. The bird was observed at very close quarters for a long period and there could be no mistaking it. This might be the first sight record of this bird south of the Equator.

I heard and saw a Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita* on 9th December 1974 in the pine-tree windbreak on this farm where I observed the Amur Falcon. On 12th February 1975 I was again there, at about the same time, i.e. 10 a.m. on a bright windy morning and heard more chiffchaffs singing. I moved along the windbreak about a km and heard others singing, and it is possible that there were quite large numbers of these birds present. In the past I have only come across one or two chiffchaffs at a time, and most existing records show the same.

Mrs Daniell of Mau Narok saw a small party of four Red-shanks *Tringa totanus* near the Mara River on 26th December 1974, which backs up Bett's record from Narok quoted by Backhurst *et al.* (*op. cit.*).

Incidentally, this has been a remarkable year for Blackcaps *Sylvia atricapilla,* which have inundated this farm both in the forest and up the rivers since October. There might have been 1000 - 2000 birds here at one time, and only in 1961 have I seen similar numbers.

REFERENCE:

Backhurst, G.C.? Britton, P.L. & Mann, C.F. 1973. The less common Palaearctic migrant birds of Kenya and Tanzania. *Jl E. Africa nat. H Hist. Soc. Nat. Mus.* 140:1-38.

P.H.B. Sessions, P.O. Elmenteita, Kenya.

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RINGING NEWS

Just in time for this issue comes the news of the second ever recovery of an East African-ringed bird in Africa (outside East Africa).

The first was the Little Stint *Calidris minuta* to Zaire and the second, also a wader, was a Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatalis* ringed at Lake Nakuru on 15th April 1972 and found dead by Dr A.C. Kemp on 13th January 1975 at Rooiwal sewage ponds, Transvaal, South Africa. The Great Circle distance between these two points is 3133 km.

This is only the second recovery from the 1200 or so Marsh Sandpipers ringed in East Africa; the first went from Magadi to Naivasha (145 km) where it was caught and released.

There is a very interesting recovery reported in the Portuguese journal *Cyanopica* 1(4):51-73 which is worth absracting:

Acrocephalus palustris Marsh Warbler

Brussels Ringed 12.7.1969 1st W. Antwerp, Belgium, 51.13'N., 4.25'E.
A169047

Recovered 17.12.1969 Beira, Mozambique, 19.49'S., 34.52'E.

The Marsh Warbler is one of the few European species which migrates south-east; it is known from the standard texts that the bird winters in "east Africa from Kenya to Natal" but, apart from the Czech example controlled in Nairobi (East African Bird Ringing Report 1971-72 p.15), this recovery to Mozambique is, as far as I know, only the second to be made in the Ethiopian Region. It should be mentioned, however, that the "Reed" Warbler *A.scirpaceus* (Brandenburg, Germany - south end Lake Nyasa) reported by Zink 1973 (*Der Zug europäischer Singvogel, ein Atlas der Wiederfunde beringter Vogel.* Radolfzell, Max-Plank-Institut für Verhaltensphysiologie) was probably in fact, a Marsh Warbler. There have been no recoveries yet from the 3300 of this species ringed in East Africa.

Graeme Backhurst, Ringing Organizer, E.A.N.H.S.
Box 29003, Kabete.

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THE BACKGROUND TO THE FOURTH PAN - AFRICAN ORNITHOLOGICAL CONGRESS, KENYA, 1976

The first PAOC was held in Livingstone in mid 1957; it lasted for six days and 181 people attended. The second and third PAOCs were held in Pietermaritzburg and the Kruger Park in 1964 and 1969; both were for five days and attracted 119 and 217 people respectively. The fourth PAOC, scheduled for November 1976 at the Taita Hills Lodge is for eight days and about 250 people are expected to attend.

At the XV International Ornithological Congress in The Hague in 1970 the possibility of holding the Fourth PAOC in Kenya was discussed by a number of people. It was emphasised that the Congress would lose much if South Africans were excluded; I was asked to find out whether it would be practible to hold the Congress in Kenya and whether South Africans would be admitted. On my return to Kenya I asked R.E. Leakey for his help but he was unable to get Kenya Government approval for South African participation. The matter rested until June 1974 when D.A. Turner managed to obtain written permission from the Kenya Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the admittance of South African passport holders. Further Don Turner agreed to organise the Congress towards the end of 1976.

In August 1974 at the XVI International Ornithological Congress in Canberra, Prof. J.M. Winterbottom called a meeting, which about 40 people attended, to discuss the next PAOC. Swaziland and Kenya were the only two venues proposed and, after hearing the letter from the Kenya Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the meeting unanimoulsly chose Kenya. After much discussion it was voted that November - December was better than July August, even bearing in mind the possible inconvenience to some academics: the weather would be better and the presence of Palaearctic migrants would be an added bonus. The meeting asked me to organise the Congress in Kenya.

In Canborra I canvassed the views of as many people as possible and it was clear that Mrs B.P. Hall was the popular choice for Congress President; she agreed to this when I met her in England in December 1974. She suggested that an American and a Frenchman should be her Vice-Presidents - accordingly Drs F.B. Gill and G. Morel have been approached.

The *primary* aims of an ornithological congress are to hear about and to discuss birds rather than to *watch* them, thus the choice of venue should depend upon suitable accommodation, adequate lecture hall facilities and pleasant surroundings. It is also most desirable to have all delegates together; any scientific conference that requires its members to be accomodated in scattered hotels loses much in wasted time and cuts down the possibilities of informal discussions - such an important part of any congress. Don Turner set about finding a place that would meet the above criteria as well as offering exclusive use to Congress members, reasonable costs and unrestrained bird-watching possibilities in an ornithologically significant area. The possibilities at Lake Naivasha were examined where tented accomadotion would have been necessary; this site was rejected on the grounds of cost and difficulty of organisation (for 250 people). Hilton Hotels Ltd. was the only firm that could offer accomodation meeting all the necessary criteria and *GAURANTEE A PRICE FOR NOVEMBER 1976*. In these days of inflation this is no mean achievement.

In the organisation of the Congress I plan to incorporate various innovations aimed at increasing the efficiency of the meeting and designed to ensure the enjoyment of the Congress by members. First of all, there should be no "parallel sessions" where people either have to miss certain papers or to be constantly on the move from one room to another. Secondly, there seems no advantage in spending hours listening to delagates reading their papers if these papers can be read at at leisure beforehand. I therefore propose that all papers be submitted in stencil form well before the Congress; the Congress Administration will run off enough copies for all participants; the paper itself will not be read by the author at the Congress, instead he will present a short summary after which the paper will be open to discussion. The discussion will be professionally recorded and later transcribed in the Proceedings which will be distributed free to all Congress members as soon as possible afterwards.

The cost of the Congress is (for one person sharing a double room) : KShs.2000/- (US$/3000.00) plus KSHS.350/- (US$50.00) regristration fee. There is a single room supplement of KShs400/- (US$58.00). These charges cover eight days full-board accomodation (including all meals, end of Congress Banquet, and all Government taxes and tips); transport between the Congress and Nairobi and both mid-Conress excursions and National Park entrance charges. East African residents may reduce these costs by KShs800/- by using their own transport, however it must be emphasised that if a person *does* use his own vehicle he will not be able to go on the mid-Congress excursions in a Congress minibus; he will also have to pay his own Park entrance fees.

Although I mentioned that the *primary* aim of a Congress is not to watch birds, it is obvious that most participants would prefer to have the Congress located in a bird rich environment rather than in a city centre. South east Kenya is a fine area for birds and has the advantage that it will be a new area to many (even to some locals). Pre- and post-Congress excursions are being offered (at extra cost) and will be of particular interest to newcomers to Kenya. The first, a seven day trip, will cover Kakamega Forest, Lakes Nakuru and Naivasha and the Samburu Reserve. The second excursion, after the Congress, will be based on the coast and take in the Shimba Hills, Mida Creek and the Sokoke-Arabuko Forest; it will last five days.

A.D. Forbes-Watson,
Secretary General,
4th PAOC,
Box 40658, Nairobi.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

BREEDING OF STUHLMANN'S STARLING AND NARINA'S TROGON

Dr van Someren's notes on these species in the February 1975 issue of the *Bulletin* are most interesting. However, assuming that Stuhlmann's Starling *Poeoptera stuhlmanni* is conspecific with Kenrick's Starling (as in some modern checklists, but not in that of A.D. Forbes-Watson) his is not the first record of the breeding habits of *P. stuhlmanni.* I observed Kenrick's Starling *Poeoptera kenricki* (or *P.s. kenricki*, or *Stilbopsar kenricki*) prospecting an old barbet hole in a dead tree in Embu district many years ago and recorded the details in *Jl E. Africa nat. Hist. Soc.* XXV. 110:41-52 in a paper on the redwinged starlings of Kenya. I have also seen the western race or species *P. stuhlmanni* prospecting similar nest holes in the forests near Kericho but none have ever been accessible. I have also seen Stuhlmann's Starling in western Ethiopia prospecting a nest hole of the Bearded Woodpecker *Thripias namaquus* in a tall dead tree. This fact was recorded in a paper by myself and E.K. Urban, *Walia* No.2:13-40 in June 1970. (*Walia* is the journal of the Ethiopian Natural History Society).

It is likely that both Stuhlmann's and Kenrick's Starling breed in old Woodpecker or Barbet holes in dead trees, and possibly in natural holes also. Their eggs are unlikely to be described until someone is prepared to risk breaking his neck ascending a tall dead limb. All the places where I have seen the birds prospecting have been of this sort. However, I have never felt like breaking my own neck or causing someone else to risk breaking his because in all cases I have myself observed there has been no certainty that the nest would contain eggs when one got there.

Regarding Narina's Trogon, some details of the breeding of this species in the Ololua Forest near my home at Karen were given in *Bull. Br. Orn. Club* 90:2-6- 1970. I regularly re-visit the nest hole therein described; and as a result I can state that such holes are re-occupied from time to time but not necessarily every year, or at the same season of the year. I have found this hole occupied on 5.5.68 (large young) eggs probably laid in March; 18.3.69 C.3 addled, taken and given to the National Museum; 27.6.71. C.3, incubation advanced, with the female sitting. She sat so tight that I could not believe that it was an adult, caused her to fly, and she deserted; 29.4. 74. C.2 fresh, bird not incubating. She was sitting on 4.5.74. and mindful of the previous occasion I did not disturb her. On 20.5. the nest had been robbed, presumably by a natural predator. Since the eggs were certainly still being incubated on 14.5.74 the incubation period is at least 16 days, probably longer. Thus, between March 1968 and April 1974 four clutches have been laid in this nest-hole. I found another nest in 1974, in the top of a rotten stump, with C.2 on 5.6.74. This nest contained only one egg on 15.6. which was later taken, but broken. It had been deserted, possibly because woodcutters had hacked at the stump. Thus my experience is that eggs are laid from March, possibly February, to June, that is during the long rains. Possibly the eggs found addled on 18.3.69. were laid in February, in response to very heavy early rains that year. One other definite record, of a nearly fledged young in April 1939 (eggs early March?) is available from the E.A.N. H.S. nest record cards, (Museum collection).

Trogons in the Ololua Forest are unquestionably migratory, disappearing during the dry season largely or entirely, and re-appearing in the rains. Males at once start calling in response to heavy rain, both in Kenya and in Ethiopia (where this species occurs up to 3500 m a.s.l. in *Hypericum-Erica* forest). Males appear to call regularly also in the short rains, November, but I have not actually found evidence of breeding at that time. Several males may call in a comparitively small area, behaviour suggestive of a communal display ground; this has also been observed by Dr van Someren and by others. Females in the Ololua forest are always more unobtrusive and difficult to find than males, which possibly outnumber them. A crude preliminary appraisal of the behaviour is that males take up territories where they may or may not be joined by females. The low "rook-rook-rook" calls uttered by males are more likely to be given when females are present. I have twice since seen the striking pre-copulation flight described by me in 1970 (*Bull. Br. Orn. Club* 90:2-6), in which the male describes an arc with fluttering wings and his bright red chest and belly feathers erected; this may or may not end with successful copulation.

Evidently, once the female is sitting, the nest is extremely difficult to find. She sits so tight that she will allow a human being to look in on her repeatedly at a range of 30 cm or less. It was this that caused me to examine one nest more closely inadvertantly, causing her to desert. I have not done any sustained observations at any nest. However, now that between us we know of two nest holes at least, it should be possible to obtain more detail on the breeding cycle of these little known birds. Despite being common, nothing much is known about them elsewhere, and there are only a few nest-record cards in the library of the P.F.I.A.O. at Cape Town.

I suggest, from what Dr van Someren says in his note, that he found not one nest but two. I do not see how a young bird could fly from one nest hole to another in immature plumage; and in any case why should it enter a hole?

Does Dr van Someren suggest that trogons *carry* their nearly grown young from from one nest hole to another? Since I have seen more than one female in attendance on a calling male, it is not impossible that a male successful in holding a territory in competition with other males may eventually be bigamous or polygamous. I merely make these suggestions as conjecture which may be worth following up when anyone has a trogon apparently nesting or displaying in their garden, as people at Karen often do.

L.H. Brown,
Box 24916,
Karen,
Kenya.

Sir,

Some years ago Mr J.G. Stranch of the Bird Section of the Zoology Museum, University of Michigan, U.S.A. was intending to do a study of the *Stephanibyx* group of plovers of the genus *Vanellus*, but the plan fell through.

I have been keeping particular records of the Black-winged Plover *V. melanopterus* in this area over the last 20 years, and find that these birds consistantly disappear for the three months October to December. In January they return in small numbers, increasing until May/June when they breed, finally leaving in September in large flocks of thousands.

I would be very interested if any member has records of these plovers in the months of October, November and December, especially if they occurred in large flocks. I have occasionally seen them in ones and twos at this time, and W.G. Harvey in the May 1974 *Bulletin* noted a single bird on the Kunduchi flats, near Dar es Salaam, in January 1971. Clive Mann (pers. comm.) informs me that he has seen them in the Ngorongoro Crater in December. Clancey (1964) perhaps gives a clue, for he says that Zululand and Natal birds breed on upland or plateau country, but are found in the non-breeding season in flocks on the coastal flats.

Certainly, when I see our birds returning in January they are all coming from the south, and it may be possible that the Kenya birds migrate as far as the south-east African coastline.

A similar situation occurs with *V. lugubris* the Senegal Plover, which, according to Harvey (*op. cit.*) occurs as a non-breeding visitor to the Tanzanian coast, although it is known to breed many hundreds of miles away inland.

REFERENCE:

Clancey, P.A. 1964. *The Birds of Natal and Zululand.* Edinburgh and London: Oliver and Boyd.

P.H.B. Sessions,
P.O. Elmenteita,
Kenya.

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POINTS FROM THE A. G. M. HELD ON 10th MARCH 1975

The question of added security in the Library was mentioned in the Chairman's report. This action has been necessitated through problems experienced in the Library during the last year - books disappearing and others having plates removed. Members will now be asked to produce current membership cards before borrowing books and all visitors will be asked to sign the visitors book.

MEMBERSHIP FIGURES, SUBSCRIPTIONS AND PUBLICITY: The Chairman reported that the membership figures had kept fairly constant, with a steady flow of new members to replace those not renewing, but the Society will need to increase its membership still more to enable it to continue to function. The Chairman pointed out the rising costs of everything, the most excessive increase being postage. The cost of posting the monthly *Bulletin* has gone up from Sh.200/- per month to over 600/-. The Chairman then asked those members present to endorse a mandate passed at last year's A.G.M. giving the Executive Committee authority, should it consider it necessary, to increase the annual subscription by an amount not exceeding Sh.20/- without calling an Extraordinary General Meeting. This was carried by a majority. The Chairman also appealed to all members to try to obtain at least one new member and do everything possible to encourage people to join. Publicity Posters are available and members are asked to display them in shops, offices, etc.

A member at the meeting raised the perennial point of the *Bulletin* containing "too much" material on birds, may we again remind members that the solution is in *YOUR* hands; whatever is received, providing the subject is on an aspect of Natural History, is published. So, if your interest is botany, entomology or whatever, please contribute.

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SECOND NOTICE

FOURTH PAN - AFRICAN ORNITHOLOGICAL CONGRESS, KENYA, 1976

The preliminary notice appeared in the *EANHS Bull.* 1975:18. The dates of the Congress have now been changed to 6th - 13th November 1976. East African members will find a registration form enclosed with this issue; those wishing to attend should send the completed form and fee(s) as soon as possible to The Treasurer, 4th Pan-African Congress, Box 48019, Nairobi.

A.D. Forbes-Watson,
Secretary General, 4th P.A.O.C.
Box 40658, Nairobi.

D.A. Turner,
Organising Secretary, 4th P.A.O.C.,
Box 48019, Nairobi.

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THIS *BULLETIN'S* COVER

Local members will notice the odd out-of-date cover enclosing this month's issue. We are sorry about this but have the following explanation to offer: the Co-opted Members of Committee, whose names are printed inside the back cover, are co-opted each year by the new Executive Committee at it's first meeting after the A.G.M. The first meeting was held on 19th March; the copy for the back cover was taken to the printer the following morning but they are unable to gaurantee delivery in time for posting before the Easter weekend which falls at the end of March this year.

Ed.

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LIBRARY NOTES

Twenty books were added to the Library during 1974. Three were purchased by the Society:

Ewer, R.F. *The Carnivores.* London, Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1973.

Mollison, S. *Kenya's coast.* Nairobi, E.A. Publishing House, 1971.

Stanek, V.J. *The Pictorial Encyclopaedia of Insects.* London, Hamlyn, repr. 1972.

Two were sent for review in the *Bulletin* and presented to the Society:

Pitman, C.R.S. *A guide to the Snakes of Uganda.* Revised Edition, Hitchin, Wheldon & Wesley, 1974.
Mead, Chris *Bird Ringing.* Tring, British Trust for Ornithology, 1974.

The others are gifts from members:

Adams, Henry *Mont-Saint-Michel and Chartres.* Boston, Houghton Mifflin repr. 1933.
Ashton, E.O. *Swahili Grammer (including intonation.)* 2nd. ed. London, Longmans, repr. 1959.
Bates, Marston *The forest and the sea: a look at the economy of nature and the ecology of man.* New York, American Museum of Natural History, 1960.
Debenham, Frank *Discovery and exploration: an atlas-history of man's journeys into the unknown.* 2nd . ed. London, Hamlyn, 1968.
Dyer, Anthony *Classic African animals: the big five.* Illustrations by Bob Kuhn. New York, Winchester Press, 1973.
Herlocker, D.J. & Dirschl, H.J. *Vegetation of the Ngorongoro conservation area, Tanzania.* Ottawa, Canadian Wildlife Service Report Series, No. 19, 1972.
Levi, Peter *The light garden of the angel king: journeys in Afghanistan.* Newton Abbot, Readers Union, 1973.
Lind, E.M. & Morrison, M.E.S. *East African vegetation.* London, Longmans, 1974.
Murphy, Dervla *In Ethiopia with a mule.* London, Murray, 1968.
Pearson, John (ed). *Wildlife and safari in Kenya: a comprehensive guidebook for travellers.* Nairobi, E.A. Publishing House, 1967.
Seyffert, Oskar *A dictionary of classical antiquities . .* revised and edited by Henry Nettleship & J.E. Sandys. 3rd. ed. New York Meridian Books. repr. 1958
Steere, Edward *A handbook of the Swahili language as spoken at Zanzibar. .* 4th ed. revised by A.B. Hellier. London, Sheldon Press, repr. 1955.

In addition three typewritten theses for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy were lodged here by the authors:

Andrews, Peter. Miocene primates (Pongidae, Hylobatidae) of East Africa. submitted, 1973.

Van Couvering, J.A. Geology of Rusinga Island and correlation of the Mid-Tertiary fauna. 1972.
Van Couvering, J.A.H. Palaeontology and comparative osteology of some African Cichlid fishes. 1972.

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SOCIETY FUNCTIONS

Unfortunately we will be unable to hold a lecture during April as the Museum Hall is being re-decorated.

Sunday, 13th April 1975: Dudu Crawl, led by M. Clifton, Full day, meet at Museum at 9.00 h.

Thursday, 17th April: Film show, Living with Elephants. At Hotel Intercontintal, for details see National Press.

19th/20th April 1975: Weekend camp at Nakuru, arranged by Mrs Daphne Curtis & Mrs Mary Bruce - Details on application to the Hon. Secretary.

10/11th May 1975: Weekend at the Education Centre, Tsavo East Nat. Park, Voi. Dormitory accomodation available. Further details next month.

Sunday, 18th May 1975: Day visit to Cianda Estate, Kiambu. Details later.

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NEW MEMBERS - FEBRUARY 1975

Full members:

Mr W.P. Beattie, Box 29046, Nairobi.
Mr D. Blackhurst, Box 30301, Nairobi
Mr R.D. Buxton, Tsavo Res. Project, Box 14, Voi, Kenya.
Mrs M. Candy, Kaimosi Tea Estates, Box 1, Kaimosi, Kenya.
Mrs June Dirks, Box 30601, Nairobi.
Prof. G.O. Douglas, Educ. Dept. Comm. & Tech., Box 30197, Nairobi.
Mr S. Goodhart, O.B.M.S., P.O. Loitokitok, Kenya.
Mr B.E. Hirst, Box 1, Nandi Hills, Kenya.
Miss C.E. Judy, C/o American Express, Box 40433, Nairobi.
Mr C.W. Marsh, "Michelele", P.O. Garsen, via Malindi, Kenya.
Mr V.O. De Masi, C/o Peace Corps, Box 30518, Nairobi.
Mr P.H. Perrett, Box 30426, Nairobi.
Mr J.W. Simons, Box 47363, Nairobi.
Prof. Dr D.J. Todt, D78 Freiburg, Kreuzhopfstr. 5, West Germany.
Dr Ham Van der Vossen, Box 4, Ruiru, Kenya.
Mr D. Webley, Box 41822, Nairobi.
Mr D.E. Wolf, C/o American Express, Box 40433, Nairobi.
Mrs Wray, Box 21579, Nairobi.

Junior members:

Richard L. Cifelli, National Museum, Box 40658, Nairobi.
Lynne Gaffikin, C/o Prof. London, Box 30197, Nairobi.
Miss Suzie Weekes, Box 19031, Nairobi.

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UPLAND KENYA WILD FLOWERS

We have been informed that this book has now arrived in Nairobi and Members who put their names down for copies at the reduced price will be able to collect them from the Library on or after 15th April. Please bring the money with you if you have not already paid. The price in England is £7.75 and in Nairobi will be about 170/- Members can get copies through the Society for 136/-. It is hoped that those living outside Nairobi will be able to arrange to collect their copies, or have them collected, as otherwise we shall have to charge them an extra 6/30 for postage. Members who have not yet put their names down can still do so theough the Librarian.

P.M. Allen, Box 44486, Nairobi.

SOME RECENT PERIODIC LITERATURE AVAILABLE IN THE LIBRAY

Bally, P.R.O. & Carter, S. 1974 Miscellaneous notes on the flora of tropical East Africa. *Candollea* 29:389-91.

Din, N.A. & Eltringham, S.K. 1974 Breeding of the Pink-backed Pelican, *Pelecanus rufescens* in Rwenzori National Park, Uganda; with notes on colony of Marabou Storks. *Ibis* 116:477-93.

Greenwood, P.H. 1974 The *Haplochromis* species (Pisces: Cichlidae) of Lake Rudolf, in East Africa. *Bull.Brit.Mus.(Nat.Hist.) Zool.* 27:141-165.

Hanford, L. 1974 The African Scale insect genus *Udinia* de Lotto (Coccidae). *Trans.Roy Ent.Soc.Lond.* 126:1-40.

Hartmann-Schröder, G. 1974 Weitere Polychaeten von Ostafrika (Moçambique und Tanzania *Mitteil.Hamburg Zool.Mus.* 71:23-33.

Hemmer, H. 1974 Untersuchungen zur Stammesgeschichte der Pantherkatzen (Pantherinae). Vol3. Zur Arteschichte des Löwen *Panthera (Panthera) leo*. *Veröff.Zool.Staatssamml.München* 17:167-280

Hooijer, D.A. & Maglio, V.J. 1974 Happarions from the late Miocene and Pliocene of Nortwestern Kenya. *Zool.Verhandel.Leiden* No.134.

International Union for the Conservation of Nature 1974 Education seminar held in East Africa. *IUCN Bull* 5:39.

" " 1975 Programme activities: East African park authorities agree on regional cooperation. *Bull.* 5:42.

Oboussier, H. 1974 Beitrage zur Kenntnis afrikanischer Gazellen unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des Körperbaus der Hypophyse und der Hirngrösse. *Mitteil.Hamburg Zool.Mus.* 71:215-257.

Pester, F.R.N. & Laurence, B.R. 1974 The parasite load of some game animals. *J.Zool.* 174:397-406.

THE EAST AFRICA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Chairman: J. S. Karmali

Vice Chairman: Mrs J. Hayes

Editor, Jl E. Africa nat. Hist. Soc. Nat. Mus.: Dr P. J. Greenway O.B.E.

Secretary: Mrs D. Collins

Librarian: Miss P. M. Allen

Treasurer: Mrs J. Williams Chandley

Executive Committee (in addition to the above): Miss D. Angwin; G. C. Backhurst (*Ringing Organizer and Editor EANHS Bulletin*); Mrs A. L. Campbell; E. T. Monks; M. P. Clifton; A. Duff-Mackay; Miss J. Donisthorpe.

Co-opted Members: Mrs H. A. Britton (*Nest Record Scheme Organizer*); N. Chumo; Dr J. Kokwaro, J. Maikweki, T. D. Morris; F. Ng'weno; Mrs I. Preston. Miss E. Wangari

The Journal Editorial Sub Committee consists of Dr Greenway, Miss D. Angwin, Mrs V. Balcome, M. P. Clifton, A. D. Forbes-Watson.

MEMBERSHIP

This offers you free entry to the National Museum, Nairobi; free lectures, films, slide shows or discussions every month in Nairobi; field trips and camps led by experienced guides; free use of the joint Society-National Museum Library (postal borrowing is also possible); reciprocal arrangements with the Uganda Society's Library in the Uganda Museum, Kampala; family participation: wives and children of members may attend most Society functions; one copy of the *EANHS Bulletin* every month; a copy of each *Journal* published during your period of membership; the Society controls the ringing of birds in East Africa and welcomes new ringers; the Society runs an active Nest Record Scheme; activities such as plant mapping and game counting are undertaken on a group basis. Membership rates are given at the foot of this page.

JOURNAL

The Society publishes *The Journal of the East Africa Natural History Society and National Museum*. Each issue consists usually of one paper, however, sometimes two or more short papers may be combined to form one number. The aim of this method of presentation is to ensure prompt publication of scientific information; a title page is issued at the end of each year so that the year's papers may be bound together. Contributions, which should be typed in double spacing on one side of the paper, with wide margins, should be sent to the Secretary, Box 44486, Nairobi, Kenya. Authors receive twenty-five reprints of their article free, provided that these are ordered at the time the proofs are returned.

E.A.N.H.S. BULLETIN

This is a duplicated monthly magazine which exists for the rapid publication of short notes, articles, letters and reviews. Contributions, which may be written in clear handwriting or typed, should be sent to the Editor (*EANHS Bulletin*), P.O. Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi, Kenya. Line drawings will be considered if they add to the value of the article, photographs cannot be published.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Life	One payment: K shs.	500/-
Institutional (schools, libraries) .	annual payment: K shs.	50/-
Full	annual payment: K shs.	50/-
Junior (full-time student, no *Journal* supplied) . . .	annual payment: K shs.	10/-

Subscriptions are due 1st January. From 1st July you may join at half the yearly rate and receive publications from that date. Application forms for membership are obtainable from the Secretary, Box 44486. Nairobi.

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BULLETIN

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LIBRARIES

A monthly publication of the East Africa Natural History Society, Box 44486, Nairobi, Kenya. Price 2 shillings

NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Members of the Society (and non-members) are asked to follow these simple instructions when writing articles or letters for submission to the *Bulletin*. The *Bulletin* is presented each month in a duplicated format: the paper size is 20.5×23 cm (10×8 inches), line drawings can be reproduced but the area should not be more than 17.5×23 cm. Lettering on figures should preferably be in 'Letraset', neatly done in Indian ink or left blank: if the last method is followed, the lettering should be indicated on an overlaying sheet and should *not* be done on the figure. Figures should be prepared on good quality white writing paper and not on Bristol Board or other thick material. Whenever plants or animals are mentioned the scientific name should also be given but not in parenthesis. Trinomials should not be used unless there is good reason to do so. Author's names of species are not required.

Contributions may be typed (preferably) or written clearly and should be sent to: G. C. Backhurst, Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi, Kenya. Receipt of contributions will be acknowledged.

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EDITORIAL

Inflation is the name of the game and the reason for writing this Editorial. As you all know, everything is going up in price these days and, in most cases, we can do nothing about it except to cut back on our spending. On 24th February this year the E.A. Posts and Telecommunications Corporation introduced new charges for all their services (except apparently, overseas parcels); some of the most swingeing increases have been in the inland printed paper rates, which of course affect the costs of posting your *Bulletins* and *Journals*. The printed paper increases are quite staggering and worth setting down for all to see:

Weight	Old Rate	New Rate	Increase
Not over 20g	20 cents	40 cents	100 %
Not over 50g	25 cents	75 cents	200 %
Not over 100g	30 cents	Sh. 1.00	233 %
Not over 250g	50 cents	Sh. 1.50	200 %

With *your* help, we propose to come to grips with the Post Office's increases while, at the same time, giving you your money's worth. We propose to reduce the number of *Bulletins* : the June issue will be the last monthly number; the next one will appear at the end of July (August number) and thereafter at two monthly intervals.

As you are all aware, the bulk of the matter appearing in the *Bulletin* is contributed by ordinary (as opposed to Committee) members, it is therefore up to you to ensure that the number of pages appearing per year remains more or less unchanged. With your co-operation, each issue of the *Bulletin* should be almost twice as big as before. ...

Your new Functions Committee has been doing a great deal of hard work so that the programme of events for several months ahead is completely organised already and will appear in the *Bulletin* to give you ample time to plan.

The story regarding contributions is not so rosy: I have just one one-page contribution in hand which is not, however, suitable for publication at present. Yet again, I ask all of you to help. It may be worth repeating (especially to the more scientific members) that the *Bulletin* is widely circulated overseas; please consider offering your next short paper to your *Bulletin* rather than to a more established journal, and see it in print in weeks rather than years. Also, may I remind contributors to please send material for publication to me and not to the Secretary - this will ensure more rapid publication.

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THREE SHOWY WILDFLOWERS TO LOOK FOR DURING MAY

With the coming of the Rains, the grasslands in Nairobi become a sea of wildflowers in a few weeks. As quickly as they spring up these flowers fade, buried by the waves of the grass. Here are three to look for during May.

Two or three weeks after the start of the rains, the yellow six-sided stars of *Hypoxis*, the "Yellow Star Grass", begin to spangle the grasslands, the flowers opening about 9 a.m. and closing again after 3 p.m. During the dry season, *Hypoxis* is a thick, well buried corm; from this corm the leaves and yellow flowers continue to grow for most of the rainy season.

Craterostigma or "Rock Violets" probably react to the rain most dramatically: the grey shrivelled remains of their leaves turn green overnight. About three weeks later the blue or purple two-lipped flowers open above the rosette of deeply veined leaves. *Craterostigma* is widespread in Nairobi, growing sometimes scattered, sometimes massed. As the purple *Craterostigma* ends, the smaller White Rock Violet *Craterostigma hirsutum* forms snowy carpets in the dry forest clearings in Langata.

About four to five weeks after the start of the Long Rains, many large white flowers can be seen nodding over the tops of the grasses - wild white Gladiolus, listed in our books as *Acidanthera candida*, but now sunk into *Gladiolus*.
The White Gladiolus is erect, with stiff leaves and six-parted, fragrant flowers; The white "Waste Paper Flower" *Rhamphicarpa*, which carpets the black-cotton plain later in the season, is closer to the ground and its flowers appear 4 or 5 parted. A fine stand of White Gladiolus can be seen at the southeastern end of Lower Hill Road on Nairobi Hill.

Nairobi National Park is probably the best place to look for *Hypoxis*, *Craterostigma*, *Gladiolus* and other flowers of the Rains, but many small vacant lots in Nairobi Hill, Nairobi West and Nairobi South are just as interesting. Burned fields and areas of poor drainage such as thin soil with rock outcrops or heavy black-cotton soil are best for wildflowers, as there is less competition from the grass. With the new *Upland Kenya Wildflowers* by A.D.Q. Agnew (Oxford University Press, Shs.170/-) we can now begin to identify them, and as we learn their names we also see them better.

Fleur Ng'Weno,
Box 42271,
Nairobi.

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THE NANDI BEAR, FACT OR FICTION?

In *Nature* of Jan. 10th 1975, Martin Pickford reports the finding of a fossilised proximal phalanx of a large Chalicothere from the Lukeino Formation. On describing a Chalicothere to his field assistant Mr Kiptolan Chepboi, he was told that he had accurately described a *chemosit*, and several other local people who were later given the same description also agreed with Mr Chepboi.

In 1924 C.W. Andrews published a note in which he discussed the discovery of a fossilised toe-bone from a species of Chalicothere obtained in Uganda, near Lake Albert (*Jl E. Africa Uganda nat. Hist. Soc.* 20:22-23) and he states:

> "The Chalicothere (Ancylopoda) are one of the most peculiar groups of Mammals: actually belonging to the Perissodactyla, the uneven-toed Ungulates, of which the horse, rhinoceros and tapir are the modern representatives, but instead of having hoofs they have developed enormous claws, the supporting bones of which are deeply cleft as in some of the Edentata . . . Abel has recently published an elaborate account of the Chalicothere and has given a restoration of Macrotherium which is here reproduced" (figure).

In the early years of this century, there were persistent reports by European settlers and officials of sightings of a strange animal which the Nandi people called *chemosit*, which later came to be known as the "Nandi Bear", and in 1913 Mr C.W. Hobley gave a summary of some of the more notable of these stories in a paper published in the *Journal* "On some unidentified Beasts" (*ibid.* 3:48).

Later, in 1914 A. Blayney Percival (*ibid.* 4:127-128) reported the killing of a *chemosit* in the Marakwet district and, in 1924 he writes in *A Game Ranger's Notebook* that he had been trying for many years to discover on what foundation the reports of an animal called the "chemosit", said to inhabit the Nandi Forests, were based and concluded that ". . . the more I hear, the more difficult it becomes to reconcile this creature with any known species . . ." but that he believed that an animal of arboreal and nocturnal habit in the Nandi Forest awaits discovery, description and a scientific name.

The varying descriptions of the animal were so confusing that none of the pundits could agree on whether it was a bear, an outsize hyaena, a giant ratel or a giant baboon or perhaps a composite of all these. But Nandi people, when shown pictures of bears picked them out as most closely resembling the *chemosit*, and all eye-witnesses were agreed that it was like nothing they had seen before. In local Kalenjin legend it had and probably still has, a terrifying reputation. Nandi mothers in the old days would threaten their children with the *chemosit* e.g. "if you don't eat up your food the *chemosit* will come and eat you".

Heuvelmans (*On the Track of Unknown Animals* London, Rupert Hart-Davis 1959) gives a comprehensive resumé of the conflicting theories and concludes that science is still a long way from officially adding the "Nandi Bear" to the list of African fauna, so it is the more interesting that Pickford (*op. cit.*) should have found further fossilised evidence - separated, as he points out, by more than two generations and a considerable distance, that indeed the *chemosit* and the Chalicothere closely resemble each other.

It would be interesting too to hear of any more recent reports of the *chemosit*, but perhaps it has already died out, surviving only in local mythology.

Daphne Backhurst, Box 29003, Kabete.

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TWO NOTES ON KENYA MARINE LIFE

We found our first Crown of Thorns Starfish *Acanthaster planci* on the coral rubble off Ras Iwetine at the southern end of Bamburi Beach on 30th March 1975.

It was at least 20 cm across, with many spine-covered arms. When we first saw it it was reddish purple in colour, but when we poked it with a stick it turned chalky blue. When we tried to turn it over with the stick, it rolled itself into a ball like a hedgehog.

Sea Slugs - shell-less snails, were well represented in the Bamburi Beach tidepools. They included Sea Hares, in the order Tectibranchia, and many members of the order Nudibranchiata, including the beautiful red, white and orange Spanish Dancer Nudibranch *Hexabranchus* sp.

There were also two species which I cannot place - one bright orange with irridescent white bumps and a small flat shell on top, the other entirely pale grey mud-colour with a warty rubbery top without visible gills or cerata.

I would be grateful to hear of any references on the identification of Indian Ocean Sea Slugs.

Fleur Ng'weno, Box 42271, Nairobi.

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UPLAND KENYA WILDFLOWERS

The books have now arrived and I should be grateful if members would collect their copies as soon as possible. Please bring the money (Shs.136/-) if you have not already paid.

Members who have not put their names on the list can still do so, but please bring or send the money when notifying me, so that I may know how many extra copies to get. Anyone wishing to have his copy sent by post should also add Shs.6/50 for postage.

P.M. Allen, Librarian.

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CAMPING TRIP TO THE MARA

Four of us spent the weekend 28th February to 2nd March camping on the Mara River, upstream of the Mara bridge and outside the Game Reserve boundary. The area is in block 61, a photographic block although the first thing I picked up on reaching the camp site was a spent .303 cartridge. We paid the appropriate fees to the Game Department office, but thereafter were not required to show the receipt to anyone, not even at the barrier at Ewaso Ngiro.

From Narok the road is good in parts and nowhere really bad - the curate would have approved - and we found a beautiful camp site by the simple process of driving along the river bank slowly until a suitable spot presented itself. The suitable spot was at a point where the river doubled back on itself through an angle of about 140° forming a slim triangle of land, ending in a bank just wide enough to accomodate four camp chairs, and just high enough to form an excellent viewing platform. We camped a hundred metres back from the point, leaving a prudent gap for the couple of hundred hippotamus to come out and graze. I counted 140 together at one time with many more round the corner.

Across the river the ground rises steeply to form the escarpment, but on our side was flat with widely scattered whistling thorn, making no heavy demands during our morning and evening walks. The vegetation along the river bank is, of course, profuse.

On the far bank of the river opposite the point was a very recently dead hippo, lying on its side with its head just in the water. It was not possible to say how it had died, but the reaction of the other hippo was interesting. One walked slowly over to the dead one, getting slower as it got closer, until it was barely moving. When it was finally right up to the head of the other, it sniffed a little, felt all over the head with its lips and then licked the dead face. After two or three minutes it backed very slowly off and returned to the water. This, except for the licking, was repeated by other hippo. The following day the corpse had started to inflate and was lying on its back with the head submerged and, as far as we could see, provoked no further interest among the hippo. We were rather intrigued by the fact that the hippo and two dead buffalo *Syncerus caffer* were totally ignored by the very large number of vultures which spent all day idly circling overhead. (I suppose that nothing is idly undertaken by any species other than *Homo sapiens* really.) One buffalo was a little further upstream on a sloping bank, lying head down, and the other was across the river in the open. In all three cases there was no apparent cause of death, that is, no sign of fighting or attack by predators. We wondered whether blood is necessary to attract scavengers, because in addition to the the vultures we also saw three Spotted Hyaenas *Crocuta crocuta* in the vicinity of the camp.

Another interesting phenomenon which enlivened an otherwise sticky afternoon was a dust devil minus dust which roared down the river, keeping strictly to the water and following the bends until it came to our bend which proved too much for it, for it fell off the edge and died. We heard the wind when it was still a long way off and were able to follow its passage through the trees. It was the kind which moves tents and until we realised that it was keeping between the banks, we were getting ready to hold five guys each, hands, feet and teeth. In the event all the fly sheet did was flap idly as the wind passed some fifty metres away. It was a vicious little depression and we were very lucky that it stayed where it did.

Early morning and late evening walks were very productive from the point of view of game and bird watching and we saw several species, no doubt common but which we, novices, had not seen before. Among these were the Woodland Kingfisher *Halcyon senegalensis*, Caspian Plover *Charadrius asiaticus* as well as several of the species *avis incognita*, including That Bird with Red Wings *A. illa alis rubicundis* a Barbet I Think with a Green Head *Lybius fortasse capite viride* a Plover Not in Williams *Charadrius non in Williamsi libra* and a Lark or Pipit Not Seen Before *Mirafra non ante visa*.

What we did not see was a single human being from begining to end, although the full moon, rising behind the trees gave us a few nasty moments when incorrectly identified as a land-rover driving along the river bank. Once established firmly as being no longer in contact with the ground, the "head-lamp" was ignored and we returned to concentrate on the claret and cheese.

In spite of defective vision, miniature tornados and infuriatingly unidentifiable birds, it was the best weekend we have spent in the bush and we suggest that it be seriously considered for a future Society long weekend camp.

G. Preston, Box 21342, Nairobi.

CAMP ON NGOBIT ESTATE 11th - 12th JAN. 1975

As no Society outing has taken place in March and a report on the Lake Nakuru camp may come too late for the May *Bulletin*, readers might appreciate belated write-ups on two previous field trips, with all due apologies from the author. The first of these on 11th and 12th January 1975, attracted some 30 members to a camp site 4 km east of Ngobit House, on an estate owned by the Carnegie family since 1919, mainly ranching country blending in to the wooded foothills of the northeastern Aberdares, 70 km from Nyeri. A preparatory note for an EANHS Camp held there from 4th to 6th August 1972 (not covered by a subsequent *Bulletin* report) abounds in references to wildlife supposedly existing on the Estate. Mr John Carnegie, remembering much earlier times still, told us of the occasion in 1937 when two parties approaching Ngobit House from opposite directions, had counted about 6000 head of game across only a few miles of grassland. Alas, nothing of that profusion remained for our 1975 trip, perhaps largely due to the fifth year of sub-normal rainfall and drought conditions prevailing on the Estate. Camp itself was pitched in a clearing between low-altitude forest and not too remote from a swamp, offered no glimpse of mammalian life, except for a hyrax concert in the early hours of the night. True, the motorist travelling from Ngobit Fishing Lodge towards Thomson's Falls is surprised to see gazelle, especially Thomson's, so frequently grazing behind the fences on both sides, and we were told this was not a case of deliberate "game ranching". Drought in general however has forced farmers themselves to reduce livestock density to one unit for every 10 acres (instead of the customary 8.5).

As in 1972, Mr and Mrs Carnegie really went out of their way again to make the outing pleasant and memorable for us, and the Society owes them a lot of thanks indeed. Besides providing water and milk, our hosts led a long Sunday morning walk down into the Ngobit River gorge, with Mr John Carnegie proving to be the most knowledgeable botanist of us all and pointing out such curiosities as the "simi plant". This was followed by an invitation into Ngobit House gardens to have our picnic lunches there, and a long drive in two sturdy vehicles up into the Aberdare National Park where the road has been improved and a Parks entrance gate will be set up shortly. In high altitude forest and bamboo thicket members stalked a troop of colobus monkeys. Above the forest, with Mt. Kenya remaining cloudless for much of the day, Highland heather vegetation could be studied and we turned round at over 3000 m altitude with the first specimens of white-yellowish protea around.

An impressive list of birds was seen, both open country and forest species and also buffalo, waterbuck, a rhino and steinbok.

Franz Rader, Box 30560, Nairobi.

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MOUNT LONGONOT CLIMB 19th JAN. 1975

After the Ol Lolokwe camp and climb in mid-December, the E.A.N.H.S. competed once more with the Mountain Club of Kenya by organising a one-day excursion to Mount Longonot. The usual hazard of having this trip spoiled by finding one's car broken into or damaged upon return, was perfectly eluded by the hiring of two Securicor guards who kept a watch at the car park while members scrambled up the crater slope. The car park is nearly 5 km from a turning immediately before the level crossing on the Nakuru railway line; following roughly parallel the rail, one should avoid the first and second track turning towards the mountain but take the third which is extremely dusty and potholed. The climb up to the crater rim is very dusty again, and deep ditches, even ravines, washed out by rains accompany the well-defined footpath. Vexed by thirst, the dust and an unsure foothold, the climber eventually finds him- or herself looking into the crater hole earlier than expected, after struggling up between 30 minutes and one hour, depending on one's condition. Longonot's crater floor, about 2 km in diameter, is densely covered by shrubs and trees, very green when we were there; but the steam jets and hot springs observed by earlier visitors and showing on many photographs had completely disappeared: as a consequence of the poor short rains of 1974, or characteristic of the progressing desiccation of the Great Rift Valley? Along the crater rim, turning right and following a steeper route one may reach the summit of Longonot (2776 m) in little more than one hour; turning left and walking clockwise as it were (seen from above) one would take at least two. I hesitate to say which direction is easier but some steep rock traverses on the "longer side" would suggest one had better manage the latter on one's way down. Again rain and the apparent frequency of visitors have eroded the footpath into a fathom-deep ravine in places, very tiring due to its narrow bottom and the dusty slippery debris on which one has to tread. Yet the sights of Lake Naivasha, both Rift Valley Escarpments, and the interesting volcanic geology from above, are well worth the effort. What strikes one about the crater rim formation is that yellowish or greyish-white diatomite sediment covers much of its higher segments while the black lava gravel and dust are found more at the lower altitudes, so apparently lake-floor sediments were lifted higher by volcanic eruptions than the "hot stuff" proper.

The crater floor seems completely devoid of larger animal life as it must well be for the absence of any drinking water source. Circling above the crater rim, I think I have observed three White-headed and two Egyptian Vultures. But the species occuring most frequently is a swift-like bluish-grey bird with rufous underparts which I could not identify, and there is a larger relative, dark blue, with primaries rufous underneath in flight. Seated on the ground, White-naped Ravens *Corvus albicollis* congregated in twos and threes. Most surprising of all I saw a Jackson's Francolin *Francolinus jacksoni* close to the very peak of Mount Logonot.

I hope that the Society will repeat this obviously popular day trip again under watchmen's cover, but if possible also assuring the participation of professional naturalists, thoroughly knowledgeable in their respective fields, whom we seem to miss more and more on our excursions.

Franz Rader, Box 30560, Nairobi.

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RINGING NEWS

The first ringing recovery to be notified from the Palaearctic for some months has just come in: an immature Swallow *Hirundo rustica* ringed by J.F. and L.M. Harper at Lake Nakuru, Kenya on 30th September 1972 was "found" (no other details) on 17th March 1975 at Nāşīriyah in Iraq. In his registered airmail letter, the finder Mr Hassan Tallab Tawilly, ends by saying "I felt it necessary to send it [the ring] to you, to serve science, progress and study. My best wishes."

Graeme Backhurst, Box 29003, Kabete.

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SOCIETY FUNCTIONS

Sunday 4th May & 25th May 1975: Two short trips to identify wildflowers in Nairobi grasslands, led by Mrs Fleur Ng'Weno. Meet at the National Museum, Nairobi at 10.45 a.m. Some lifts will be available. Please bring notebook and pencil. The trips will end at about 1.30 p.m.

10th/11th May 1975: Weekend visit to the Education Centre, Tsavo East National Park, Voi. The Education Centre is operated by the Kenya National Parks and Miss Osborn, who is a life member of the Natural History Society, has very kindly arranged for this weeend visit for Society members.

There will be a programme arranged including a trip into the Park, talks, films, discussions, etc., commencing at 2.15 p.m. on Saturday, 10th and ending at 12.30 p.m. Sunday 11th. ACCOMMODATION - Charges sh.2/50 per person per night. There is a total of 50 beds and mattresses which can be distributed according to need between two dormitories and one bedroom with four beds. Other facilities include a Gents' and Ladies' bathroom each with showers, basins, toilets. A kitchen with 4 gas burners and gas cylinders for cooking, a deep freeze, sinks etc. Drinking water is available. All food must be taken, also cooking and eating utensils and bedding. Pillows are not provided. Members are asked to take food for a barbecue supper on the Saturday night to be cooked over a camp fire. Entry fees to the park will be -/50 cents per person (for Kenya residents) and members should carry their current membership cards. Vehicles can enter free providing they are not used in the park - a National Parks bus is available to carry up to 35 people - at no extra charge. If members wish to use their own vehicles a charge of Sh.10/- will be made.

Will all members interested please return the enclosed form to the Secretary, Mrs Collins, as soon as possible.

Monday 12th May 1975: At 5.15 p.m. at the National Museum Hall, Nairobi. Mr Micheal Baumer, Director of Division of Ecosystems and Natural Resources, U.N.E.P. will speak on "Natural Resources in Perspective". (This may be too scientific for children).

Sunday 18th May 1975: Visit to Cianda Estate, Kiambu, by kind invitation of Mr and Mrs A. Clifford. Please meet at 10 a.m. at the farm. Go *through* Kiambu, continue for 7 km along the Kiambu/Limuru road to sign saying Cianda Estate. Please bring picnic lunch and be prepared for showers. Flowering plants will be in evidence at this time, and it is hoped to make a comprehensive bird list for this area of mixed cattle and coffee farming.

Monday 9th June 1975: At 5.15 p.m. at the National Museum Hall, Nairobi. The film "Winged World" will be shown by kind permission of the Wildlife Clubs of Kenya.

Sunday 22nd June 1975: Day visit to Akiri Ranch (Rift valley near Longonot). Please meet at 9.30 a.m. at the Satellite Station on the Narok Road about 65 km from Nairobi, taking main Nairobi/Nakuru Road and turning left to Narok at the foot of the escarpment. The purpose of the field trip will be to study wild animals (& birds) and habitat on a developed cattle ranch. Please bring picnic lunch and plenty of drinking water. Leader Dr C. Field.

5th/6th July 1975: Week-end field trip to the Selengai Area. Leader: Professor N. Skinner. Details later.

Monday 14th July 1975: At 5.15 p.m. at the National Museum Hall, Nairobi. Dr C. Field will give an illustrated talk: "Desert Safari".
Wednesday morning bird walks will continue as usual; meet at the National Museum at 8.45 a.m. every Wednesday. Beginners are especially welcome.

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THE APRIL *BULLETIN* - CORRECTION

P.43, third paragraph, second line, should read:

K.Shs.2000/- (US$300.00) plus K.Shs.350/- (US$50.00) regristration fee.

There were several other typing errors in this issue for which we apologise.

Ed.

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NEW MEMBERS MAY 1975

Life Member:

Mr H. Sassoon, Fort Jesus Museum, Box 82412, Mombasa, Kenya.

Full Members:

Mrs P. Fisher, Kenya High School, Box 30035, Nairobi.
Mr W.J.D. Fowler, Box 18, Limuru, Kenya.
Mr K.W.S. Kane, Vet. Res. Laboratory, P.O. Kabete.
Dr N.K.M. de Leeuw, Box 30588, Nairobi.
Mrs I. Ross-Munro, Box 24968, Karen, Kenya.
Miss R. Oliver, Box 4LL90, Nairobi.
Mr & Mrs J.D. Walton, D.S. 103, Bujumbura, Burundi.

Junior Members:

Miss Betty Eidemiller, c/o Dr Sale, Box 30197, Nairobi.
Miss Lee Ellen Hedrick, c/o Dr Senga, Box 14295, Nairobi.
Miss Nancy Masters, c/o Dr Senga, Box 14295, Nairobi.

Institutional Member:

Hillcrest Secondary School, Box 24819, Nairobi.

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SOME RECENT PERIODIC LITERATURE AVAILABLE IN THE LIBRARY

Ashton, E.H. *et al.* 1975 The taxonomic and functional significance of overall body proportions in primates. *J. Zool.* 175:73-105.

Bally, P.R.O. & Carter, S. 1974 New species of succulent *Euphorbia* from tropical East Africa. *Kew Bull.* 29:507-516.

Day, M.C. 1974 A revision of *Atopompilus* Arnold, with a note on the identity of *Anoplinellus* Banks. (Hymenoptera: Pompilidae). *Bull. Brit. Mus. (Nat Hist.) Ent.* 31:47-69.

Dobler, H. 1973 Catalogue of the types preserved in the collections of the former Deutsches Entomologis. Institut. (Coleoptera: Cicindelidae). *Beitr. Ent.* 23:355-420.

Eltringham, S.K. 1975 Territory size and distribution in the African Fish Eagle. *J. Zool.* 175:1-13.

Fischer-Piette, E. & Metivier, B. 1974 Sur divers mollusques terrestres et fluviatiles de Somalie et Abyssinie. *Bull. Mus. Natl. Hist.* 3e ser. No.203 (Zool.133).

Griffin, D.J.G. 1974 Spider crabs (Crustacea: Brachyura: Majidae) from the International Indian Ocean expedition, 1963-64. *Smithsonian Contrib. Zool.* No.182.

Hall, B.P. 1975 Cyril Winthrop Mackworth-Praed (Obituary). *Ibis* 117:116-7.

Hanid, M.A. 1974 The identity of *Chlorophytum affine* (Liliaceae). *Kew Bull.* 29:585-91.

Mabberly, D.J. 1974 The Pachycaul Lobelias of Africa and St. Helena. *Kew Bull.* 29:535-84.

Marwinski, F. 1973 From the work of the library of the former Deutsches Entomologisches Institut: papers left by Horn. *Beitr. Ent* 23:445-71.

" " " " Papers left by deceased entomologists. *ibid.* 23:427-44.

Oehlke, J. & Wudowenz, J. 1973 Catalogue of the types preserved in the collections of the former Deutsches Entomologisches Institut (Hymenoptera: Sphegidae) *Beitr. Ent.* 23:421-26.

Pierre, J. 1974 Polymorphisme et coupes infraspecifiques africaines dans d'éspéce *Danaus chrysippus* (L.) (Insecta: Lepidoptera: Danaidae). *Bull. Mus. Natl. Hist. Nat.* 3e ser. No.221(Zool.149.

Pomeroy, D.E. 1975 Birds as scavengers of refuse in Uganda. *Ibis* 117:69-81.

Singer, R. 1974 Epitaph for a fossil hunter (review of "By the evidence" by L.S.B. Leakey). *Natural History, New York* 83(9):103-106.

Smith, C.A. 1975 Systematics of parrots. *Ibis* 117:18-66.

Tobias, P.V. 1974 The Taung skull revisited. *Natural History, New York.* 83(10):38-43.

Worrall, J. 1975 The pink Flamingoes of Lake Nakuru, Kenya. . . . are being rescued. *Commonwealth* 17:19.

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The Society publishes *The Journal of the East Africa Natural History Society and National Museum.* Each issue consists usually of one paper, however, sometimes two or more short papers may be combined to form one number. The aim of this method of presentation is to ensure prompt publication of scientific information; a title page is issued at the end of each year so that the year's papers may be bound together. Contributions, which should be typed in double spacing on one side of the paper, with wide margins, should be sent to the Secretary, Box 44486, Nairobi, Kenya. Authors receive twenty-five reprints of their article free, provided that these are ordered at the time the proofs are returned.

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This is a duplicated monthly magazine which exists for the rapid publication of short notes, articles, letters and reviews. Contributions, which may be written in clear handwriting or typed, should be sent to the Editor (*EANHS Bulletin*), P.O. Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi, Kenya. Line drawings will be considered if they add to the value of the article, photographs cannot be published.

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NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Members of the Society (and non-members) are asked to follow these simple instructions when writing articles or letters for submission to the *Bulletin*. The *Bulletin* is presented each month in a duplicated format: the paper size is 20.5×23 cm (10×8 inches), line drawings can be reproduced but the area should not be more than 17.5×23 cm. Lettering on figures should preferably be in 'Letraset', neatly done in Indian ink or left blank: if the last method is followed, the lettering should be indicated on an overlaying sheet and should *not* be done on the figure. Figures should be prepared on good quality white writing paper and not on Bristol Board or other thick material. Whenever plants or animals are mentioned the scientific name should also be given but not in parenthesis. Trinomials should not be used unless there is good reason to do so. Author's names of species are not required.

Contributions may be typed (preferably) or written clearly and should be sent to: G. C. Backhurst, Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi, Kenya. Receipt of contributions will be acknowledged.

EANHS BULLETIN JUNE/JULY 1975

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DARK - COLOURED EGRETS ON THE KENYA COAST

Many visitors are uncertain of the identity of the small dark-coloured egrets which they see at Mida Creek and elsewhere on the Kenya coast. It is hoped that this note will help to clarify the rather complex situation existing in this area.

The Little Egret *Egretta garzetta* is a common bird along the Kenya shore and is typically white; but a small minority are grey, lavender-grey or slate, with only a little white, often confined to the throat. This dark morph is commoner further south, in coastal Tanzania and Madagascar.

The Western Reef Egret *E. gularis* (= Reef Heron *E. schistacea*) is similarly sized and similarly proportioned to the Little Egret and is sometimes considered a form of the Little Egret (*E. garzetta schistacea*). It occurs in similar white, grey, slate and particoloured morphs, and is a common bird of the Red Sea and Somalia coasts. It has a yellow bill. Forbes-Watson (1966, *Jl E. Africa nat.Hist.Soc.* 25(3):233) recorded it at Kilifi and I have recorded it on the open shore at Kikambala (April 1971) and in mangroves at Mida Creek. Dr Margaret Carswell (*in litt.*) has a January 1975 record from the south coast at Twiga Lodge. Her bird was of the grey morph but had yellow legs and toes. Accompanied by Pat and Ann Donnelly and my wife Hazel I saw a similar grey bird with greenish legs roosting in mangroves at Mida Creek alongside a very dark slate-coloured Little Egret on 16 April 1975. Typically, *E. gularis* has black legs with greenish yellow toes, but in all other respects these two birds were typical *E. gularis* of the grey morph. White *E. gularis* have not been reported from the Kenya coast.

The Black Heron (or Black Egret) *E. ardesiaca* is a local bird in Kenya, well known for its characteristic 'umbrella' attitude while fishing. It nests in the heronry at Garsen on the Tana River but I know of no marine habitat records away from Mida Creek, where up to a dozen or so individuals are often encountered. It is entirely slate-black with a black bill and lacks the white throat or other white areas of the dark morphs of *E. garzetta* and *E. gularis*.

Murton (1971, *Ibis* 113(1): 97-99) discusses polymorphism in herons and egrets and includes data from the East African coast. He concludes that "plumage polymorphism in Ardeidae occurs when a single species occupies a habitat in isolation from closely related species, which might otherwise partition the resources; this most often occurs in a coastal environment, possibly facilitated by the existence of tide cycles and the opportunity to use distinct feeding methods". Dark forms seem to rely on active pursuit feeding methods, while white plumage seems to help in wait and surprise feeding methods.

Murton suggests that ornithologists in suitable parts of the World should make further observations on the different feeding habits of pale and dark morphs. The dark morph of the Little Egret is not sufficiently common in Kenya for any quantitative study, but parts of the Tanzania coast might be excellent for such a study. There might well be a habitat difference also with one morph favouring white sand beaches and the other favouring mangrove areas with dark-coloured mud. Such correlation with beach colour has been demonstrated for the two morphs of the Reef Egret *E. sacra* in Polyneasia by Holyoak (1973, *Ibis* 115(3): 419-420).

Peter L. Britton, Box 90163, Mombasa.

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LESSER SPOTTED EAGLE IN KENYA

With reference to the note by Mr Dowsett in the *EANHS Bull* 1975:14 on the observation of a Lesser Spotted Eagle *Aquila pomarina* in Tsavo, members might be interested in another occurence of this species in Kenya.

On 1 January 1973, about 50 km east of Archer's Post in a little visited area of Northern Kenya two eagles were seen on the ground. One was photographed by our son and identified by us as the Lesser Spotted Eagle. The bird was subsequently identified from the photograph by Mr Richard Porter of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and by Mr Bent Pors Nielsen. I quote from Mr Porter's letter . . . "both myself and colleague Bent Pors Nielsen, with whom I have been studying raptors for a number of years, agree that the bird you saw in Kenya was a Lesser Spotted Eagle. I now return your print. The nostrils appear round thus indicating Lesser Spotted rather than Spotted, the plumage colour, tibial feathers, bill and white-tipped coverts all fit in well with *pomarina,* as does the shape of the head which is 'bear' like rather than small and slim as in Spotted *A. clanga* ."

Perhaps this rare species occurs more often than is realised in Kenya in the remote areas, where it may not often be observed by ornithologists.

Ian and Lise Campbell, Box 14469, Nairobi.

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AN OCCURENCE OF *LARUS MELANOCEPHALUS*

THE MEDITERRANEAN GULL AT LAKE RUDOLF, KENYA

On 12 April 1975 we were watching a flock of several hundred Grey-headed Gulls *Larus cirrocephalus* and Black-headed Gulls *L. ridibundus* on the open shore on the east side of Ferguson's Spit, when our attention was drawn to an immature gull of a third species. The bird was slightly larger than adjacent *cirrocephalus* and differed strikingly from both *cirrocephalus* and *ridibundus* in bill form. The bill was relatively stout, slightly expanded distally with the tip of the lower mandible angled, recalling the bill shape of larger larids such as the Lesser Black-backed Gull *L. fuscus*. Other details are as follows:

Body whitish, head with conspicuous dark spot behind eye. Tail white with narrow black terminal band. The central tail feathers were however completely white, suggesting that the bird was moulting into adult plumage. Wing and outer primaries dark blackish-brown contrasting with adjacent portion of inner primaries. Inner primaries with brownish terminal band extending inwards onto the tips of the secondaries. Remainder of wing generally pale grey. Bill light orange with dark tip. Legs reddish. Iris dark.

The bird was observed a second time in the same locality on 15 April.

This appears to be the first East African record of *Larus melanocephalus* an east Mediterranean and Black Sea species.

A.J. Hopson, Lake Rudolf Fisheries Research Project,
Ferguson's Gulf, Private Mail Bag, Kitale, Kenya.

Rolf de Vos, Floravagen - 6, 44300 Lerum, Sweden.

Per Magnusson, Domargaten 13, s - 72475 Vasteras, Sweden.

Leif Johansson, Hallgaten 21c, S - 72461 Vasteras, Sweden.

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BLACKHEAD PLOVER NESTING

There seem to be few accounts of Blackhead Plovers *Vanellus tectus* nesting, so the following account may be of interest.

A pair of Blackhead Plovers was resident in our garden at Garissa, North-Eastern Province, Kenya from late November 1974. Much of the day they spent in the shade of acacia trees and bougainvillea bushes. They were most active in the mornings and evenings and left the garden at night. These plovers are common in this province and often active at night. Their cries are one of the most familiar night noises.

We saw them mating several times in late December including 30 December. On 31 December they occupied an exposed site on the flat sand where some small stones had been left in a circle by our children. At 1300 hrs. one of the birds was seen squatting in this circle and at 1800 hrs. sitting there. On 1 January 1975 at 0900 hrs. one egg was seen in the nest. Mating was seen again at 1030 hrs. By evening a second egg was laid.

Both birds incubated the eggs. The eggs were not left during the day, one bird sitting while the other remained in the shade of trees some 25 m away. On several occasions the one sitting was heard to call to the other. There was no elaborate ritual with change-overs. The sitting one just moved off and began pecking on the ground nearby and the other came and sat on the eggs. The area was not shaded and during the heat of the day the sitting bird kept the feathers ruffled and the bill open. They changed position during the day, usually facing east-north-east for most of the day but west in the mornings and evenings.

They often left the eggs for fairly long periods in the early morning and evening and at night.

On 27 January 1975 in the afternoon the sitting bird was seen bending the head forward as if to look under her. She was making soft clucking noises. That evening a chick was seen. It was able to scramble over the stones of the nest area. It was about 5 cm long with brown-black mottled back, grey cap, white neck and underparts. There was no sign of the black central breast marking. The next day an adult was seen carrying fragments of egg-shell away from the nest and placing them on the ground several metres away. The second chick hatched on 28 January between 0800 - 1000 hrs. By evening all four birds were active some 25 m from the nest. The young ones running in the same manner as the adults, a short run, stop, pause and run again. On 29 January they all left the garden and were not seen again.

Throughout the whole period of their stay they were remarkably tame. We were able to go to water young plants 3 m from the nest without them leaving the nest or showing any alarm, both during incubation and after the first chick had hatched.

R. and L.M. Greenham, Box 29, Garissa, Kenya.

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A NATURAL HYBRID BETWEEN *PAPILLIO DARDANUS* X *P. PHORCAS*

In *EANHS Bull.* 1971:36 I drew attention with an illustration, to what I termed "an almost melanistic" form of the butterfly *Papillio dardanus*.

At the Ordinary Meeting on 19 February 1975 of The Royal Entomological Society of London (*Proceedings* Vol.39 No. 9), Sir Cyril Clarke and Professor P.M. Sheppard exhibited set specimens of the progeny of hard-paired matings between *P. dardanus* and *P. phorcas*. One of these specimens, a male, was clearly that described by Rothschild and Jordan as *P. nandina*.

That *P. nandina* was but a hybrid had been suggested by Dr Carcasson to Mr R.I. Vane-Wright for the original two specimens, which have remained unique for many years. The specimen I described was given to Mr L. McLeod who doubted my identification, however he has now shown this specimen to Mr Vane-Wright at the British Museum (Natural History) and it is now agreed that the insect is "*P. nandina*" and another example of a natural wild hybrid between *P. dardanus* and *P. phorcas*.

G.R. Cunningham - van Someren, Box 24947, Karen.

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BIRDS TRAPPED IN SPIDERS' WEBS

Many readers will have seen the big black and yellow spider *Nephila*, which often suspends its large webs from the eaves of houses as well as among tree branches. Three instances of birds trapped in such webs were observed in Dar es Salaam.

On 4 April 1974 Mr N. Gardiner called our attention to a Little Swift *Apus affinus* which was caught in a large web constructed below a group of swift's nests on the roof of the Zoology Department building. The bird's wings and feet were completely entangled in the web and it was unable to make any further efforts to escape. A large female *Nephila* occupied the web, but she did not approach the trapped bird. After it was removed from the web and examined (no physical sign of spider bite such as fang marks, swelling or irritation was observed), the swift was placed on a ledge from which it flew away, apparently unharmed by its experience.

Also in April 1974, the dried, barely identifiable body of a Bronze Mannikin *Lonchura cucullata* was found in a *Nephila* web in a tree, about 4 m above the ground. This bird had not been encased in web silk (as is often the case for at least some spiders' prey) and appeared to have died after entangling itself.

On 6 April 1975, Miss Janet Gardiner rescued an adult Bronze Mannikin which was trapped in a *Nephila* web constructed near a pot wall (hollow brick) sunbreaker on a University house; two Mannikin nests were built in the hollow bricks. The bird was held only by a single strand of web which had become entangled in its tail feathers and which it was unable to break and escape. The female *Nephila* remained in a corner of the web and made no attempt to move in the direction of the struggling bird.

McKeown (quoted in: Yates, J.H., 1968 *Spiders of Southern Africa*, Books of Africa, Capetown) suggests that evidence supports the view that not only are birds captured in spiders' webs but that they are fed upon by spiders as well. However he does not mention any definite record of this. Our observations show that birds are definitely trapped in *Nephila* webs, but we have never seen a spider feeding on a trapped bird.

Perhaps readers will be able to offer further examples of birds trapped in spiders' webs and/or spiders feeding on birds.

K.M. Howell and C.J. Muangirwa,
Dept. of Zoology, University of Dar es Salaam,
Box 35064, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

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A RECORD OF THE SPRINGHARE *PEDETES CAPENSIS* FROM COASTAL TANZANIA

Pedetes capensis Forster (Family Pedetidae, Order Rodentia) has a discontinuous distribution, being found in most of South Africa, Rhodesia, Mozambique, eastern Angola, the western half of Zambia, central Tanzania, southern Kenya and in the extreme south of Zaire (Misonne, 1971). Only one species, *P. capensis* Forster (including *caffer* Pallas, *surdaster* Thomas, and eleven other synonyms) is recognised by Misonne (*op. cit.*).

A Springhare was observed at Wazo, some 16 km north of Dar es Salaam on

24 September 1973. The characteristic bushy tail, diminutive forelimbs, prominent hindlimbs, and the general kangaroo-like stance made field identification of the animal certain. The animal, which was observed three times between 1020 and 1130 hrs at a distance of less than 25 m, usually stood upright on its hind feet in an alert position or hopped through paths in the bush. The surrounding vegetation was a shrub forest of mainly *Cissus rotundifolia* (Forsk.) Vahl. (Vitaceae), *Dalbergia vaccinifolia* Vatke (Papilionaceae), and *Jasminum meyeri-johannis* Engl. (Olivaceae) entanglements which formed a roofing over the shrubs *Canthium bibracteatum* (Bak.) Hiern (and other Rubiaceae) and *Sideroxylon inerma* L. (Sapotaceae). Various large burrows on patches of bare ground were common especially in the adjacent grasslands but the mammal species to which they belonged could not be ascertained.

At the time of writing, most of the shrub forests have been cleared for cultivation; however, several thickets have survived, particularly in the Mbezi, Pane and Lugoba areas. These, with the intertwining open grasslands, might offer alternative habitats for *Pedetes.*

The Springhare in Tanzania has previously been recorded only from Ibunua: Suna; Handajega, Serengeti; Shinyanga; Kahama; Tabora; near Morogoro; Kibaya, southern Masailand; Umbugwe; Kondoa, Sandawa; near Dodoma; and Mikwesi, all localities which are in central Tanzania (Swynnerton & Hyman, 1951). Although Smithers (1966) states that the species is "purely nocturnal", the individual under discussion was seen during the daylight hours, so Dorst & Dandelot's (1970) description of its habits as "nocturnal, occasionally active by day" is more accurate. If the Springhare were present in other than the central portion of Tanzania, one would think that such a characteristic species, even if largely nocturnal, would have been reported before this time. But observations from other parts of Tanzania are needed to provide evidence as to whether the Wazo population represents the eastern extremity of the distribution of the species which has gradually extended its range since the time of Swinnerton & Hayman's *Checklist* or alternatively if *Pedetes* at Wazo represents just a further example of the discontinuous distribution of the species.

THE LOCAL NAME FOR THE SPRINGHARE. The people inhabitating the Mzisima and Bagamoyo districts of eastern mainland Tanzania refer to the Springhare as *kidukwi*, but this name may apply to several local rodents, and thus its use does not necessarily mean that *Pedetes* has been present in the area for a long time and simply overlooked by biologists. Certainly the Kiswahili word for Sprinhare listed as *kamendegere* in both Swinnerton & Hayman (1951) and Dorst & Dandelot (1970) could describe any number of small mammals, its meaning translating approximately as "resembling a small monkey".

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Swynnerton, G.H. & Hayman, R.W. 1951 A Checklist of the land mammals of the Tanganyika Territory and Zanzibar Protectorate. *Jl E. Africa nat. Hist. Soc.* 20:274-392.

P.F. Kasigwa and K.M. Howell,
Dept. of Zoology, University of Dar es Salaam,
Box 35064, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

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REVIEW AND COMMENT

UPLAND KENYA WILD FLOWERS by A.D.Q. Agnew, ix + pp.827, with numerous line drawings. Oxford University Press, 1974. Price in UK £7.75.

At long last I have a copy of this book. What a very stout effort indeed and a long overdue publication. The lack of some reference book has been a long felt want by all, botanists, amateurs or novices.

I am not a botanist but have some training, however I write as a biologist with a deep interest in ecology and, for the past two weeks I have pored over this new publication, checking and identifying collections, in the hope that a paper now in preparation will benefit, thus it has been put to practical use.

My previous references have been Battiscombe (1936), Dale & Greenway (1961) and Gillett & MacDonald (1970). For the 'wild flowers', Jex-Blake (1948, 1950), and the parts, so far published, of the 'Flora of Tropical East Africa' (Ministry of Overseas Development), also the odd notes, over the years, in the Society's *Journal*. Finally, my own herbarium gathered in over forty years and determined for many years by the staff of the Coryndon Museum and the E.A. Herbarium. This material is not just a botanical collection but gatherings made as part of ecological projects.

Ferns are included in this new book: there are several very old text books on this subject and the most recent, that of Schelpe (1970) to which reference is made. I am left to wonder though just what has happened to the several hundred sheets of fern material collected by my brother which has lain at Kew for the past twelve years or so. No reference is made to this collection in the present work.

My comments on this new book are few but as a working textbook I found an unfortunate lack of synonyms in the text and of course in the index. By dint of much work and time, I discovered that many genus and species names have been changed since the time of my original gatherings and their determinations, but I could not find any or little synonomy in Agnew. This is unfortunate for those of us who have been used to a name given to a specimen as published in the older literature, e.g. *Dolichos lupiniflorus* in Jex-Blake p.47. I just cannot find it in Agnew. *Lupiniflorus* as a synonym will not be found in the index so I am lost. Again, I find *Cyphostemma* is used for *Vitis* except under No.15, p.345. It is a little confusing. I looked for *Glycine javanica* 'an insidious little creeper' according to Jex-Blake but no synonym can be found. In the index there is *Glycine wightii* but note p.270, drawing p.240 and the note at the end of page 239; I am still stranded, is *wightii* now the name for *javanica*?

I looked up *Gladiolus psittacinus*, an important nectar species for sunbirds and I find a drawing of *psittacinus* on p. 718 but in the text p.716 we find this is a synonym of *G. natalensis*! I have specimens of *Secamone microndra* and *S. platystigma* and *Periploce lineariflora*, Asclipiads, which are constituents of our forest flora at Karen, but I cannot relate them by description to the names on p.373. My names must be synonyms. The drawing on p. 372 does not appear that of our local species.

A further comment I think is warranted, this is that rarely is the colour of the flower mentioned. This, to the amateur, is disappointing. When we come to the curcurbits, for many of us the fruit is the most obvious part of the plant, but in few instances are these conspicuous fruit described, this would have helped determination where flowers were not available. Fruit size, shape, colour or type is seldom given and this would have added but a few lines to the text. I have the same complaint with Dale & Greenway for, as far as I am concerned, it is the fruit I am interested in as a food item for birds.

Another point that worries me is the description of occurrence "this is rare, common" etc. I note under *Raphanus raphanistrum* L. an "uncommon weed", yet I know there were hundreds of acres of this most important weed in the higlands. Perhaps it is not so profilic now, due to the increased use of hormone herbicides.

I only wish the scope of the volume could have been enlarged to cover the arid areas of the Northern Province and the rich coastal zone; as it is, one at once realises that the cost would prohibit publication for many years.

All of us interested in plants must surely offer our thanks to all those persons who made this publication possible. (Acknowledgements pp.*viii-ix)* and of course to Dr Agnew and his collaborators, in making available to us this splendid volume. Lastly, I must acknowledge that Mrs Tweedie's illustrations, clean, crisp and clear, do much to assist the novice. I have already identified very many species I knew in the field but never by name. Suitably covered, this will be another volume that will be on my desk or accompanying me on safari as a ready reference. Congratulations to Dr Agnew and his collaborators.

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Dale, I & Greenway, P.J. 1961 *Kenya Trees and Shrubs.*
Jex-Blake, Lady. 1948 *Some Wild Flowers of Kenya.*
Jex-Blake, A.J. 1950 *Gardening in East Africa.*
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G.R. Cunningnam - van Someren, Box 24947, Karen.

POSTSCRIPT

Like the reviewer, I am a "non-botanist-biologist" but with botanical training. Botanical terms are more or less familiar to me although I need to look some up from time to time. The omission of a botanical glossary from Agnew's book is serious for potential users with no knowledge of botanical words (or classics). No doubt Dr Agnew was concerned to keep the size of the book within limits but the two or three pages needed for a glossary could surely have been managed. I have shown the book to one or two non-botanist members keen to use it; they were immediately baffled by the botanical words necessary to use the keys and would have to refer to another book's glossary. This chore will make the book less than popular with a large section of the public to whom it has been directed. I would suggest readers compile a glossary from other floras and stick it in this new book.

Graeme Backhurst, Box 29003, Kabete.

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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF AGGREGATIONS IN DANAID BUTTERFLIES

Clifton (1974) described gatherings of the Novice butterfly *Amauris ochlea* in the Witu Forest, Kenya. I recorded a similar phenomenon in August 1973 (dry season) in the nursery garden at the University of Dar es Salaam. In this case, a single aggregation of both *A. ochlea* and the Friar *Amauris niavius* within an area some 20 m in diameter, occurred under a large mango tree surrounded by cashew trees. The butterflies remained motionless on low vegetation, lianas and tree trunks for long periods, occasionally indulging in short feeding flights to nearby flowers. Two species of mimic, *Hypolimnas dubius* and *Pseudocraea lucretia*, were also present in the area in considerable numbers although not participating in the aggregation. At maximum density, there were about 200 *A. ochlea* and 20 *A. niavius*: all those caught were males. From marking individuals it was clear that they remained within the aggregation for several days. After three weeks, the butterflies suddenly dispersed.

I speculate that the significance of such gatherings in the Danaidae (they also occur in *Danaus chrysippus* at Dar es Salaam) lies in the need for males to collect alkaloides from suitable plants, concentrate them in the hind wing glands or pouches, transfer the concentrate (pheromone) to the hair pencils at the end of the abdomen whence it is placed on the antennae of the female to subdue her for mating. Owen (1972) recorded *D. chrysippus* males congretating to suck juices from *Heliotropicum indicum* which is now known to be a rich source of an alkaloid without which they cannot induce females to mate. It is for this reason, I believe, that males of other danaids congregate. It is easy to show that male danaids reared in captivity are unable to mate until they have been able to feed for several days from suitable flowers such as *Tridax procumbens*, *Crotalaria retusa* or *Heliotropicum*.

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Owen, D.F. 1972 *Tropical Butterflies* Oxford:Clarendon Press.

D.A.S. Smith, Department of Zoology,
Box 35064, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

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DESTRUCTION OF SPIDER'S WEBS BY BULBULS

In January 1975 a large female spider of the genus *Nephila* constructed its web between a Rangoon Creeper climbing a trellis and the wall of my house in Dar es Salaam. Two days later, I noticed a pair of Dark-capped Bulbuls *Pycnonotus barbatus* which was nesting in the area, systematically destroy the web by making repeated attacks with their beaks on the long anchor threads of the web. The spider constructed two more webs in different places at intervals of two days: each web was wrecked in an identical manner by the bulbuls and the spider was seen no more.

It is possible that large predaceous spiders are recognised as enemies by some birds. A month after this incident, the bulbuls were joined by their three fledglings which could have been in danger of becoming trapped in the web. There is evidence that small birds are trapped in *Nephila* webs although so far no definite evidence that the spiders ever actually eat their captives. (Howell & Muangirwa 1975).

REFERENCE:

Howell, K.M. & Muangirwa, C.J. 1975 Birds trapped in spiders' webs. *EANHS Bull.* 1975:67-68.

D.A.S. Smith, Department of Zoology,
Box 35064, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

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A MASSIVE MIGRATION OF THE AFRICAN MIGRANT BUTTERFLY

From 1-11 March 1975, a movement of the African Migrant *Catopsilia florella* (Pieridae) of exceptional magnitude occurred in the Dar es Salaam region. Moving along a front at least 16 km wide, the butterflies passed steadily in a northerly direction for 11 days. Relatively little movement occurred in the early morning or late afternoon, the maximum being from 1000-1500 hrs. The rate of movement was estimated variously as 200/min. at Bahari Beach by Dr J.A. Allen and 40-80/min. over my garden. Countless millions of butterflies must have been involved. Both the yellow and white female forms were present, the latter being much commoner. All new growth of *Cassia* in the area was covered with eggs. At night the butterflies roosted in hundreds in trees such as *Acacia*, *Albizia* and *Ozoroa mucronata* (the favourite).

These movements of *C. florella* , which occur every year at Dar es Salaam, seem to precede the rain moving up from the south. There are, however, great variations in numbers and timing.

Migration in *C. florella* deserves the detailed, long-term study which the Society could undertake.

D.A.S. Smith, Department of Zoology,
Box 35064, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

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A NOTE ON THE GEOLOGY OF MOUNT LONGONOT AND THE NAIVASHA BASIN

I should like to make a brief comment with respect to Mr Franz Rader's report on the Mount Longonot climb of 19 January 1975 (*EANHS Bull.* 1975: 58-59). Although I did not take part in the climb, and have not visited the upper slopes of Mount Longonot for several years, I must feel rather doubtful about the statement that "yellowish or greyish-white diatomaceous sediment" was found on the "higher segments" of the "crater rim formation". Unless this material has actually been microscopically analysed for the presence of diatoms, I would suggest that a very natural confusion has been made between diatomaceous silt and the very fine light-coloured volcanic ash which is much more likely to occur on the upper slopes of Longonot. In three years work in the Naivasha basin I have not found evidence of lake sediments above an elevation of about 6550 feet (1996 m). Diatomaceous silt is found on Longonot Farm (Grid Reference 139110 on map 133/4 of Longonot), at elevations of 1941-1951 m, and also further west round the lake (in the slopes by the Lake Road near Oserian) and in the Malewa, Gilgil and Karati valleys to the north and northeast of the basin.

It is unlikely that lake sediments would be lifted up by volcanic eruptions. The type of eruption that built up Mount Longonot would be characterized by an outpouring and piling up of material (much of it pyroclastic, i.e. fallen from the sky after being thrown up in an explosive eruption), which would tend to cover any material that had been on a pre-existing land surface. The time of existence of the larger Lake Naivasha that gave rise to the abovementioned sediments was probably later than the actual formation of Mount Longonot, though it may well have pre-dated some of the most recent minor eruptions here and in other parts of the Naivasha basin.

Celia K. Kamau, Box 73930, Nairobi.

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THE APRIL CAMP AT LAKE NAKURU NATIONAL PARK

A very good camp was held at Nakuru, in spite of the rain, and 40-50 members attended. The Park Warden, Mr Mburugu, and his staff gave the Society a great welcome, and assisted in many ways. The tents were pitched in the garden of the old farm house. This large farm has recently been bought by the Park. It extends for a long way south of the Lake, and also includes Lion Hill which lies parallel to the Lake on the East side. The farm house is built on a hill with an extensive view of the Lake and the surrounding hills. The farm houses are empty, but they were opened up for us, and we were allowed to use water and bathroom facilities. This was a great help in the wet weather.

The Park staff had brought us a huge pile of firewood, and on Saturday evening we had a good camp fire. Mr John Hopcraft and his wife and family came to the camp fire, as did Mr Mburugu, and several young scientists who are working on various projects in the Park. John Hopcraft's family have sold their farm 'Baharini' to the Park, and a Baharini Trust has been formed to further the development of the Park. John is working for the Trust, and he gave us an excellent talk around the fire, about the history and future plans for the Park, which include Lodge facilities, an education programme and a nature trail. One of the scientists who is studying flamingoes gave us an extremely interesting talk, and answered many of our questions about the recent movement of these birds.

Daphne Curtis, c/o EANHS, Box 44486, Nairobi.

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LIBRARY NOTES

Owing to recent losses and difficulties, it has been decided by Committee to put 'red spots' on all the older Africana books. So they can no longer go out on loan. It is sad. We like to think of ourselves as above average careful and appreciative, and I think we are. But the Society is bigger now and the Library used more than it used to be, and we must guard against the tiresome few.

To off-set this loss of home reading matter, Committee has taken the opportunity of buying five books which are not so old or valuable but still interesting for those who have not read them. They are:

E. Huxley - *The flame trees of Thika.* 1959.
F.D. Ommaney - *The isle of cloves.* 1957.
The shoals of Capricorn. 1954.
A.R. Siedentopf - *The last stronghold of big game.* 1947.
A. Wykes - *Snake man: the story of C.J.P. Ionides.* 1960.

To these I have added five books of my own, not because I do not like them, but because I wish for them a wider sphere of activity. They are:

J.Y. Cousteau - *The silent world.* repr. 1958; a story of undersea discovery and adventure by the first men to swim at record depths without lines to the surface.
Vivienne de Watteville - *Speak to the earth: wanderings and reflections among elephants and mountains.* 2nd. ed. 1936. (A book I was very fond of when young, perhaps not so much now, but there are very good bits in it.)
T.H. White - *The Goshawk.* Readers' Union ed. 1958. (An account of hawks and hawking by the author of *The once and future king.* Romantic, but full of information.)

Eric Hosking - *An eye for a bird.* 1970.
Peter Scott - *The eye of the wind.* 1961. (These need no comments. They were given to me and I pass them on so that fellow members may enjoy them.)

Probably some of our books would be easier to find if they were reclassified. As a Librarian I have had few more frustrating experiences than trying to fit a special library like ours into the Dewey classification, but I have written about that in another place. Meantime, members might note that it is worth while looking round sections other than those they habitually use. Books on general Natural History are at 574.9, those about the sea at 574.92. There are some good travel books at the beginning of the Botany section - 580. Behaviour and senses of animals are at 591.8, and for this you should also see the section on General Entomology at 595.7. It is true that there are only one or two books in each of these sections, but there may be more one day. Anyone who would like to see any particular section 'fattened up' is welcome to make suggestions, though no promises are made.

Priscilla Allen, Box 44486, Nairobi.

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UPLAND KENYA WILD FLOWERS

Several members who put their names down for copies of this book have not yet fetched them. Other members who would like copies should apply to the Librarian. New members should be informed that the Society made a grant of £100 towards the cost of production of this book and in return we are permitted to buy copies at a reduced price. The Society makes 8/50 on each copy to restore our reserves. Price to members is 136/- plus 6/30 if you want it sent to you by post (East Africa only).

Priscilla Allen, Box 44486, Nairobi.

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REVIEW

EAST AFRICAN MAMMALS - AN ATLAS OF EVOLUTION IN AFRICA by Jonathan Kingdon, London: Academic Press. Volume II (in two parts, A and B). Pp. 784 with numerous illustrations. UK price £36.00.

(Volume I was reviewed in *EANHS Bull.* 1971: 174-175.)

The first part deals with insectivores and bats while the second covers the lagomorphs and rodents. Since the present volume is a continuation of the work reviewed earlier, it is necessary to avoid being repetitious. Suffice it to say, in partial repetition, that the text is authoritative, informative, and very readable, and that the thousands of pencil drawings are, with very few exceptions, absolutely superb. The pages full of sketches of animals in characteristic poses give the reader an instant impression of the physical behaviour such as is otherwise illustrable only by skilled ciné. photography.

It is a pity that the large finely detailed drawings of each species (or representative of a group) have given way in some cases to a more sketchy representation. A case in point is the elephant shrew *Petrodromus tetradactylus sultan* which has, in the author's words ".... bristles on the undersurface of the tail, the tips of which are expanded into distinct knobs" (p.55). These bristles are conspicuously lacking on the *P. t. sultan* illustrated on the opposite page (or is the caption wrong and the illustration is of the nominate race?). A more serious criticism is the smaller elephant shrew *Elephantulus rufescens* illustrated on p.60; the eye and ears are too small and the base of the nose too bulbous. Of this I am sure since I have a live specimen before me while writing (and I am confident it is not a freak!), but the reader can easily check this against the 40 excellent sketches which fill pages 62 and 63. This is a great pity as it is the only positive inaccuracy of a drawing which I have found in all three books; I can only imagine the author must have drawn the illustration on p.60 in a hurry from memory or a skin - without even consulting his own sketches!

On the distribution maps the dots are presumably definite locality records. It is obviously beyond the scope of the present work to give an account of the precise localities and the authenticity of these records, but they are of great importance and it is hoped that the author will make the information available to the zoological world through some other means. I, myself, would query the occurrence of the naked mole rat *Heterocephalus glaber* in the vivinity of Voi and Taru (p.491), which localities are, furthermore, hardly consistent with the statement in the text that they are". . . limited today to Somalia, eastern Ethiopia, and northern Kenya".

It is in Vol.II, dealing with the very many species of small mammals, that the value of the author's unique pictorial keys becomes truly apparent. Not only is identification made quick, easy and positive, but at the same time one is exposed to a view of the whole group, be it order, family, or genus, and this is surely of prime importance to the fundamental understanding of any animal. The finest examples are those in the section on bats, which can only be described as superlative.

The editing of this work, with all the sketches, diagrams, maps and tables scattered throughout the text must have been a hard task, and it has been well done. The proof reading, however, has been somewhat lacking since there are quite a number of small errors of which, for example, two of the more irritating are *Funisciurus ochreatus* on p. 400 which should presumably read *F. ochraceus*, and on p.323 the measurements of *Tadarida chapini* are all 00. Not all the illustrations are captioned as they are usually obvious from the adjoining text, but there are a few unwarranted omissions as, for instance, the *Lophuromys* pictured on p. 646 which could be any one of three species.

I have not seen pp. 435 - 450 since they are missing from the review copy sent by the publishers to the National Museum/Natural History Society Library.

A. Duff-MacKay, Box 40658, Nairobi.

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THE BULLETIN

When I wrote the 'Notes for Contributors' printed inside the front cover I purposely kept them simple, unlike those in some journals, so as not to discourage people from submitting accounts of their observations. Now that the *Bulletin* (or *Newsletter* as it was during 1970) has been going for almost five years in its present format, I think it is reasonable for me to restate and slightly ammend these 'Notes'. It does not matter at all whether contributions are typed or handwritten, so long as they are CLEAR. I have kept all the original MSS and have often thought of displaying some at one of the indoor meetings: many of you would be amazed to see what a mess many contributions are - ghastly typing or writing, umpteen corrections already made, no *Bulletin* conventions followed, and often the whole thing submitted on an old scrap of rough paper (prompted by ideas of tree conservation perhaps?). Because I never have enough material in hand I cannot afford the time to return MSS to authors, so I have to decipher them as best I can in order to get the *Bulletin* out on time.

Please examine recent issues of the *Bulletin* and follow the style adopted therein: title in capitals (not underlined), text (underlining only those words which are to appear in italics), name and address, followed by REFERENCES (if any). If you submit a REVIEW please remember that you should now add your name and address after it. Please type in double or triple spacing. As I said above, there is absolutely no need to type contributions provided that the writing is clear: if your writing is not particularly clear, please print 'difficult' words.

A few words about the title of this publication are called for: the title appearing on the cover has always been *EANHS Bulletin*. It does not occur in the *'World List'* 4th edition simply because that list was published between 1963 and 1965, i.e. before the *Bulletin* began. The *'World List'*-style abbreviation is simply *EANHS Bull.* Before June 1973 the title on the contents page was given as *E.A.N.H.S. Bulletin* and, unhappily, this is also used on my address stickers: this is wrong and I am sorry about this inconsistency.

It is stated inside the front cover that all contributions will be acknowledged; when contributions will be published a few days after submission I no longer acknowledge them - this saves postage as well. It is also printed several times on the covers and in the application-for-membership form, that the *Bulletin* is a monthly publication; now this is untrue, it is a six-times a year publication (there seems to be no English word meaning 'once every two months'!).

The next issue will be for August/September 1975 and will be sent out at the end of July. Please send your contributions to me at Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi. I have only one short note in hand for the next number.

Ed.

BULLETIN INDEX FOR 1974

The index to the *Bulletin* for 1974 is being distributed with this issue.

Ed.

CAR STICKERS

These are now available from the Secretary, Sh.2/- each, if by post Sh.2/50.

E.A.V.C.C.

The East African Vintage Car Club requires the services of amateur film-makers over the weekend of 16/17 August to film the Mombasa - Nairobi Marathon Reliability Run. All film will be supplied (Super 8), and certain expenses paid. For further details please contact B. Nesbitt, Box 43013, Nairobi or telephone Nairobi 336583.

FINANCE

The balance sheet for 1974 in a new format is enclosed with this issue. The Society thanks Mr A. Owen for preparing the accounts.

Ed.

REQUEST

In the late afternoon of 20 April 1975 we observed a very interesting raptor in Nairobi National Park, about 1½ km from Hyaena Dam. From the front the bird was very white. It had heavy black feathers on its nape which produced a distinct crest. The mantle was dark brown. The bird's flight was low and very swift. We observed it for about 5 minutes at close range. Several other people also were observing the bird. In our opinion it was either an Ayres' Hawk Eagle *Hieraaetus dubius* or a pale phase Wahlberg's Eagle *Aquila wahlbergi*. We should like to hear from someone else who saw this bird and could help in its positive identification.

Robert S. Brodey and Patricia Brodey,
c/o University of Nairobi, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine,
Box 29053, Kabete, Nairobi.

FUNCTIONS

Sunday, 8 June 1975: Mr J.B. Gillett of the E. A. Herbarium will lead a botanical excursion to the Mua Hills (off the Mombasa Road near Machakos). Please meet at the National Museum at 0900 hrs. *sharp* and bring a picnic lunch. The main purpose of the outing will be to study the flowering plants of the region.

Monday, 9 June 1975: at 5.15 p.m. at the Museum Hall, Nairobi. The film "Winged World" will be shown by kind permission of the Wild Life Clubs.

Sunday, 22 June 1975: day visit to Akira Ranch (Rift Valley near Longonot). Please meet at 0930 at the Satellite Station on the Narok Road about 65 km from Nairobi, taking main Nairobi/Nakuru Road and turning towards Narok at the foot of the escarpment. The purpose of the field trip will be to study wild animals (including birds) and habitat on a developed cattle ranch. Please bring picnic lunch and plenty of drinking water, as the area may be hot. Leader: Dr C. Field.

5/6 July 1975: week-end field trip to the Selengai area. Leader, Professor N. Skinner. Distance from Nairobi about 160 km, altitude 1300 m. Members should be self-contained with all camping equipment, food, plenty of water and also petrol for the return trip. Camping will be along a dry sand river (very hot during the day but cool at night). Members wishing to take part in this excursion should fill in the enclosed form and return it to Prof. N. Skinner, Box 30197, Nairobi before 20 June. Further directions will be sent to those taking part.

Sunday 14 July: morning trip to identify flowers in the Nairobi area led by Mrs Fleur Ng'weno. Please meet at the National Museum at 0900 hrs and bring paper and pencil.

Monday, 14 July: at 5.15 p.m. at the Museum Hall, Nairobi. Dr C. Field will give an illustrated talk: "Desert Safari".

9/10 August 1975: week-end field trip to the Magadi area, leaders Mr & Mrs Kenyon. Details next issue (i.e. August/September number out end of July).

Monday, 11 August 1975: at 5.15 p.m. at the Museum Hall, Nairobi. Mr Ian Parker will talk on "Ivory".

Monday, 8 September 1975: at 5.15 p.m. at the Museum Hall, Nairobi. Dr John Dixon, Deputy Director, Science, International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology will talk on "What goes on at the ICIPE (Dirty tricks and mostly sexual at that)".

26/27/28 September, 1975: week-end field trip to Bushwhackers Safari Camp on the Athi River near Kibwezi. Camping and bandas, details next issue.

Monday, 13 October 1975: at 5.15 p.m. at the Museum Hall, Nairobi. Mr G. Rathbun will give an illustrated talk on "Elephant Shrews".

18/19/20 October, 1975: week-end field trip to Mayers' farm, Nandi Hills. Details later.

Monday, 10 November 1975: at 5.15 p.m. at the Museum Hall, Nairobi. Dr T. Hefnawy of ICIPE will give a talk on "Factors influencing ticks' behaviour".

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The list of New Members is held over, due to lack of space, until next issue.

THE EAST AFRICA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Chairman: J. S. Karmali

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Co-opted Members: Mrs H. A. Britton (*Nest Record Scheme Organizer*); N. Chumo; Dr J. Kokwaro, J. Maikweki, T. D. Morris; F. Ng'weno; Mrs I. Preston. Miss E. Wangari

The Journal Editorial Sub Committee consists of Dr Greenway, Miss D. Angwin, Mrs V. Balcome, M. P. Clifton, A. D. Forbes-Watson.

MEMBERSHIP

This offers you free entry to the National Museum, Nairobi; free lectures, films, slide shows or discussions every month in Nairobi; field trips and camps led by experienced guides; free use of the joint Society-National Museum Library (postal borrowing is also possible); reciprocal arrangements with the Uganda Society's Library in the Uganda Museum, Kampala; family participation: wives and children of members may attend most Society functions; one copy of the *EANHS Bulletin* every month; a copy of each *Journal* published during your period of membership; the Society controls the ringing of birds in East Africa and welcomes new ringers; the Society runs an active Nest Record Scheme; activities such as plant mapping and game counting are undertaken on a group basis. Membership rates are given at the foot of this page.

JOURNAL

The Society publishes *The Journal of the East Africa Natural History Society and National Museum*. Each issue consists usually of one paper, however, sometimes two or more short papers may be combined to form one number. The aim of this method of presentation is to ensure prompt publication of scientific information; a title page is issued at the end of each year so that the year's papers may be bound together. Contributions, which should be typed in double spacing on one side of the paper, with wide margins, should be sent to the Secretary, Box 44486, Nairobi, Kenya. Authors receive twenty-five reprints of their article free, provided that these are ordered at the time the proofs are returned.

E.A.N.H.S. BULLETIN

This is a duplicated monthly magazine which exists for the rapid publication of short notes, articles, letters and reviews. Contributions, which may be written in clear handwriting or typed, should be sent to the Editor (*EANHS Bulletin*), P.O. Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi, Kenya. Line drawings will be considered if they add to the value of the article, photographs cannot be published.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION RATES

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Subscriptions are due 1st January. From 1st July you may join at half the yearly rate and receive publications from that date. Application forms for membership are obtainable from the Secretary, Box 44486. Nairobi.

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NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Members of the Society (and non-members) are asked to follow these simple instructions when writing articles or letters for submission to the *Bulletin*. The *Bulletin* is presented each month in a duplicated format: the paper size is 20.5×23 cm (10×8 inches), line drawings can be reproduced but the area should not be more than 17.5×23 cm. Lettering on figures should preferably be in 'Letraset', neatly done in Indian ink or left blank: if the last method is followed, the lettering should be indicated on an overlaying sheet and should *not* be done on the figure. Figures should be prepared on good quality white writing paper and not on Bristol Board or other thick material. Whenever plants or animals are mentioned the scientific name should also be given but not in parenthesis. Trinomials should not be used unless there is good reason to do so. Author's names of species are not required.

Contributions may be typed (preferably) or written clearly and should be sent to: G. C. Backhurst, Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi, Kenya. Receipt of contributions will be acknowledged.

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AN INTERESTING FISH

In 1972, at Easter, we visited the Kimani River, an affluent of the Ruaha River in Southern Tanzania and were astonished to see hundreds of tiny fish fighting their way upstream against the boiling current just at the end of the wet season. They were moving over the rocky surface at the riverside, using every tiny crevice to obtain purchase for their fins, wriggling forward a few inches only to be swept back again by the next flurry of water.

Out of curiosity we sent some specimens to the E.A.N.H.S. who passed them on to Professor M. Hyder of Nairobi University. He kindly forwarded them to Dr Greenwood of the British Museum, who with Dr M. Poll of Brussels, identified them as *Parakneria* a genus not previously recorded from Tanzania, nor indeed East Africa. As Dr Greenwood feels that a note in the *EANHS Bulletin* might stimulate other people to look out for this localised fish, we have made some notes from our own observations and matter already published on the genus *Parakneria* by Dr Max Poll.

Parakneria belongs to the order Clupeiformes, family Knerriidae, and is found only in running water with a stony bottom. Its most common habitat is rapids or waterfalls so that its known distribution is scattered. Until recently it had only been found in the Congo basin and neighbouring rivers draining into the Atlantic. We have twice seen our species migrating up the rocky sides of the Kimani River as the water clears and its level drops near the end of the wet season. This year we found it on a waterfall there which may well be its permanent habitat.

Parakneria is a small thin fish, less than 9 cm long and about seven times as long as broad. Our specimens were silvery with dark grey bars and a greenish bronze sheen. They have no adhesive organ, but use their comparatively large fins rather like legs to cling to the rocks. They seem to be out of the water as much as in it!

It is an incredible sight to see these tiny fish wriggling forward, continually washed back, yet surviving in a habitat which one would consider almost uninhabitable.

REFERENCES:

Poll, M. 1965 Contribution a l'étude des Knerriidae et description d'un genre nouveau, le genre *Parakneria*. *Mém. Ac. R. Belg.* 36:5-28.

Poll, M. 1969 Contribution a la connaissance des *Parakneria*. *Rev. Zool. Bot. Afr.* LXXX 3-4:359-68.

N.W. and R.A. Nicholson,
Box 259, Mbeya, Tanzania.

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ON THE OCCURRENCE OF TWO RARE GULLS, *LARUS LEUCOPHTHALMUS* WHITE - EYED GULL AND *LARUS ICHTHYAETUS* GREAT BLACK - HEADED GULL AT LAKE TURKANA

On 4 April 1975 an unusual gull was noted among a mixed flock of several hundred Grey-headed Gulls *Larus cirrocephalus*, Black-headed Gulls *L. ridibundus* and Lesser Black-backed Gulls *L. fuscus* feeding on offal from a fishing camp on the south east shore of Ferguson's Gulf, Lake Turkana (formerly Lake Rudolf). The gull, an immature bird, intermediate in size between Black-headed and Grey-headed Gulls, was subsequently identified as a White-eyed Gull *L. leucophthalmus*. The following field notes were made:

Head, neck, chest and upperparts sombre brown with darker fine streaks on crown and chest. Throat paler. Belly and under-tail coverts dirty white. Upper-tail coverts white. Broad dark terminal band on tail. Wings plain sooty brown with suggestion of narrow pale line along trailing edge of secondaries. Underside of wing uniformly dark brown. Legs and feet dull yellow ochre. Bill dark, disproportionally long and slightly downcurved. Eye with white circumorbital ring and conspicuous chalky white upper eyelid.

The bird was seen subsequently along the shores of the open lake on the east side of Ferguson's Spit, on five separate days between the 6 and 14 April, usually in company with Black-headed Gulls.

The White-eyed Gull is a Red Sea species which has been recorded elsewhere in Africa only as a rare vagrant to Mozambique and South Africa (H. and P.L. Britton pers. comm.). This appears to be the first East African record.

A Great Black-headed Gull *L. ichthyaetus* was first seen on 10 April on the open lake shore at the east side of Ferguson's Spit in company with several hundred Lesser Black-backed Gulls. The bird was noticeably larger than the other gulls. Head and body were generally whitish with darker markings on the ear coverts. Wings chiefly greyish with the outer six or seven primaries blackish, forming a dark triangular terminal area. Inner primaries lighter. A broad band along the trailing edge of the secondaries is somewhat darker than the contiguous areas of the wing. Bill pale yellow with noticeable black sub-terminal band. Legs pinkish grey. The bird lacked the black band on the tail characteristic of juvenile Great Black-headed Gulls and was probably nearing maturity. It was later seen in the same area on 12 and 13 April.

The Great Black-headed Gull has been recorded previously in East Africa at Entebbe, Uganda (Pearson 1971) and more recently on the Kenya coast in the Malindi area (Britton & Duffus 1974). J.S. Ash (pers. comm.) noted at least 110 Great Black-headed Gulls on Lake Abiata, Ethiopia, in the Rift Valley, 400 km north east of Lake Turkana during January 1974.

REFERENCES:

Britton, P.L. & Duffus, P. 1974 Great Black-headed Gull at Malindi *EANHS Bulletin* 1974:51-52.

Pearson, D.J. 1971 The occurrence of a Great Black-headed Gull *Larus ichthyaetus* in Uganda. *Bull. Br. Orn. Club* 91:171-172.

A.J. and J. Hopson, Lake Turkana Fisheries Research Project,
Fisheries Department, Ferguson's Gulf, P.M.B. Kitale.

PROBABLE LESSER FRIGATE BIRD AT DAR ES SALAAM

At the Brooke Bond Director's House on the beach near Msasani Village near Dar es Salaam on 1 January 1975 I had a good view of a Frigate Bird. It flew effortlessly back and forth from the village via the beach over the house and returned to the village over the sea, coming down to the water near the village probably in search of food. Most of its flights consisted of effortlesss gliding. It was seen on 31 December 1974 by Charles Paget-Wilkes, who drew my attention to it. The small size (if one can call a wing span of 2 m small), dark throat, white underparts and black belly fit Watson's (1963) description of the female *Fregata aerial* but I was unable to make out the brown hind neck.

Unlike Harvey's (1973) bird it was in excellent condition and did not have a whitish head or pectoral band. The skull of a Frigate Bird collected near Msasani was identified by G. Watson as that of *F. a. aerial* (Uilenberg, 1975).

REFERENCES:

Harvey, W.G. 1973 A probable Lesser Frigate Bird *Fregata aerial* near Dar es Salaam. *EANHS Bullstin* 1973:100-101.
Uilenberg, G. 1975 *Amblyomma loculosum* Neumann (Ixodidae): First record from Continental Africa. *J. Med. Ent.* (in press).
Watson, G. 1963 *A Preliminary Field Guide to the Birds of the Indian Ocean.* Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

Norman Gardiner, Box 35065, Dar es Salaam.

THE USE OF WINGS BY FEEDING STORKS

On 15 June 1975, I watched a Yellow-billed Stork *Ibis ibis* catching fish, presumably *Tilapia grahami*, in shallows at the south end of Lake Magadi. The bird was feeding in an area where the lake is floored with large, smooth slabs of rock, barely covered with water, but with cracks and potholes where the water is deeper. After its arrival the stork fed at several cracks for about an hour before flying away. It would position itself by a crack with its neck more or less parallel to the surface and the bill opened so that the lower mandible was mostly just submerged together with the tip of the upper.

Sometimes it achieved this position by bending forwards from the 'hips' (the knee joints proper) while at other times it knelt with the metatarsals and toes of each leg on the rock. One wing was then raised almost vertically in the air. Left and right wings were both used but there appeared to be no consistent relationship between the wing used and the position of the bird relative to the light. The stork looked rather silly, just waiting for a fish to swim into its open bill, but the technique was remarkably effective with a fish usually being caught within a few seconds of the bird's getting into position.

The above technique differs somewhat from that described for this stork and its North American and Asian relatives *Mycteria americana* and *I. leucocephalus* by Kahl (1972) as follows: ". . a foraging stork places its partially open bill in the water and at the same time stirs or prods the substrate with rythmic pumps of one foot . . . birds sometimes quickly flash open the wing on the same side and hold it in that position for a few seconds . . . Such foot stirring and wing flashing movements appear to serve as 'herding mechanism', driving fish . . . from hiding places in bottom vegetation and into the bill where they can be seized." The Magadi bird was, of course, feeding where there is no vegetation for fish to hide in.

Yellow-billed Storks, Marabou Storks *Leptoptilos crumeniferus*, and Black Storks *Ciconia nigra* (England, 1974) also feed with the wings spread wide and brought forward of the normal flying position. I have observed this technique in Yellow-billed and Marabou storks catching *Xenopus* tadpoles and adults in shallow water-holes in Nairobi National Park.

REFERENCES:

England, M.D. 1974. Black Storks wing-spreading while feeding. *Br. Birds* 67:236-237.

Kahl, M.P. 1972. Comparative ethology of the Ciconiidae. The wood-storks (genera *Mycteria* and *Ibis*) *Ibis* 114:15-29.

J.F. Reynolds, Box 40584, Nairobi.

With reference to the above description, perhaps this behaviour could be for balancing; the birds must presumably keep as still as possible in order to catch their prey because, as Mr Reynolds points out, there is no covering vegetation to conceal either predator or prey from each other. These small *Tilapia* are very fast and nimble when disturbed. Some of the rock slabs in the shallows near the hot springs at Magadi are extremely slippery; it is possible that where the rocks slope slightly this lifting of one wing or the other (without any apparent relationship to the direction of the light) is a balancing aid. Where the birds were observed bending forwards from the 'hips' the footing in those places could have been better. The degree of slipperiness varies from step to step, as we have discovered when wading in this area during mist-netting operations - indeed, I personally generally use both 'wings' to keep my balance on these rock slabs and, even so, have experienced some nasty moments.

Daphne Backhurst, Box 29003, Kabete.

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BIRD NOTES FROM DAR ES SALAAM

In view of the scarcity of recent records for the Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus* on the Tanzanian Coast it may be of interest to note that I saw a party of five birds on the beach at Outer Makatumbe Island off Dar es Salaam in March 1972

A single Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa* was seen on two occasions at the Sewage Ponds, University of Dar es Salaam: once in November 1966, and once in December 1968.

It would appear from recent notes in the *Bulletin* (Leuthold & Leuthold 1974; Meadows, Weston & Weston 1974) that the Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus* has, as Backhurst, Britton & Mann (1973) stated, become a regular winter visitor to Kenya. They also list it as having been seen fairly regularly in Northern Tanzania.

I have visited the University of Dar es Salaam Sewage Ponds almost daily for the past ten years so I doubt that I would have missed seeing a Spotted Redshank had one been present. I had my first sighting of *T. erythropus* on 18 March 1975 and it stayed at the Sewage Ponds until 25 March 1975. Its long bill, the absence of white trailing edge wing bars, feet extending far behind the tail in flight, and call were unmistakable. A photograph of this bird by K.M. Howell, Dept of Zoology, University of Dar es Salaam, will be deposited in the Society's file.

On 15 January 1975, my wife and I had a short but close view of a pair of White Wagtails *Motacilla alba alba*, at the University Sewage Ponds, Dar es Salaam. This is the first time we have seen this bird; we got the impression they were a pair. The male was more like the illustrations of the bird in summer plumage than in winter dress but January would seem too early for it to start assuming breeding dress. Mackworth-Praed & Grant list the species as an uncommon visitor to Kenya and Uganda and suggest that stragglers find their way to Tanzania. Backhurst & Backhurst (1970) do not list the species as occurring in Tanzania.

On 13 April 1975 I rescued two Bronze-wing Mannikins from the same web which previously trapped a bird of the same species one week earlier (Howell & Muangirwa 1975). One bird was completely enmeshed and would certainly not have escaped; both were adults.

REFERENCES:

Backhurst, G.C. & Backhurst, D.E.G. 1970 A Preliminary Check-list of East African Birds. (Duplicated).

Backhurst, G.C., Britton, P.L. & Mann, C.F. 1973 The less common Palaearctic migrant birds of Kenya and Tanzania. *Jl E. Africa nat. Hist. Soc. Nat. Mus.* 140:1-38.

Howell, K.M. & Muangirwa, C.J. 1975 Birds Trapped in Spiders' Webs. *EANHS Bull.* 1975:67-68.

Leuthold, W. & Leuthold, B. 1974 Recent observations of migratory shore birds in Tsavo East National Park. *EANHS Bull.* 1974:72-74.

Meadows, B., Weston, J. & Weston, D. 1974. Spotted Redshank in Kenya during March 1974. *EANHS Bull.* 1974: 103.

Norman Gardiner, Box 35065, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

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RECORDS OF "LESS COMMON PALAEARCTIC MIGRANTS" IN TSAVO NATIONAL PARK EAST 1974 - 75

I have listed below my records (or in three cases a summary of them) of those species mentioned by Backhurst, Britton & Mann (1973) as "less common Palaearctic migrants".

I arrived in Tsavo on 12 November 1974 so will have missed some of the autumn passage and therefore these records should not be taken as representitive for the autumn occurrence of the species concerned.

European Black Stork *Ciconia nigra*

Four records in Tsavo East: two in the Galana River near Lugard's Falls (11 January and 26 January) and two on the Mbololo River (26 January and 16 February). In addition, Barbara Leuthold saw one on the Mbololo River on 4 October 1974 and I saw another on the Tsavo River 3 km into Tsavo West on 10 December 1974.

Eastern Red-footed Falcon *Falco amurensis*

I saw seven together of which at least four were males (contrasting white underwings clearly seen) over *Commiphora* woodland about 5 km south of Voi on 30 March.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

A total of eleven (3, 6, and 2) seen on three separate waterholes on the Dika Plains on 15 February.

Basra Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus griseldis*

Two seen just south of the Voi River on 10 December 1974 (identified later) and one seen in the Voi River forest (in the undergrowth) on 21 December. A few were handled at Ngulia (in Tsavo West) on 11 and 12 December and the large beak and general greyish colour noted.

[Upcher's Warbler *Hippolais languida*

A species which is almost certainly this is quite common all through the winter, but in view of its similarity to other species it must remain as only probable at present until I can catch some.]

River Warbler *Locustella fluviatilis*

I caught and ringed one 6 km north of Voi in *Commiphora* woodland on 31 March (weight 14.0 g, wing 75 mm). This is apparently only the third spring record of this species for Kenya which occurs regularly in autumn at Ngulia in Tsavo West (Backhurst & Pearson pers. comm.) though I do not have any autumn records myself.

Rufous Bush Chat *Cercotrichas galactotes*

I can only describe this species as very common throughout Tsavo East all winter wherever there are bushes. My last record is of one on 20 April.

White-throated Robin *Irania gutturalis*

I have 19 sightings from 20 November till 23 December 1974 mainly in the *Commiphora* woodland to the west of the main road just outside the park boundary and all where there were some thick bushes. My only spring record is one in the *Commiphora* woodland on 7 April but I also saw two at Taita Hills Lodge (40 km west of Voi) by the Bura River on 27 March.

Most of these records simply supplement what is already known of the species' occurrence in Kenya. However Rufous Bush Chat and probably Upcher's Warbler (assuming it is Upcher's) are probably fairly common over much of the semi-arid strip in eastern Kenya and presumably northern Tanzania and the scarcity of previous records can be ascribed to lack of observers. This is not an isolated winter, for at least for the Rufous Bush Chat, Walter Leuthold tells me that he has a few casual records from Tsavo East for each of the past five winters.

This may also hold for Irania though it certainly appears to be only a passage migrant in Tsavo. But Mackworth-Praed & Grant suggest that it does not go much further south than here. Perhaps there is a wintering area in North central Tanzania somewhere?

REFERENCE:

Backhurst, C.C., Britton, P.L. & Manr, C.F. 1973 The less common Palaearctic migrant birds of Kenya and Tanzania. *Jl E. Africa nat. Hist. Soc. Nat. Mus.* 140:1-38.

Peter Lack, Box 14, Voi, Kenya.

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MIGRANTS NEAR GARISSA

On 7 January 1975, my family and I stopped for lunch beside a waterhole at Bangali on the main road from Garissa to Thika. The following Palaearctic migrants were observed: Garganey *Anas querquedula*, Little Stint *Calidris minuta*, Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythrops* (at least four birds), Wood Sandpiper *T. glareola*, Common Sandpiper *T. ochropus*, and Marsh Sandpiper *T. stagnatilis*.

At the time of our brief visit the water level was receding but it is possibly worth recording that a pair of Dabchicks *Podiceps ruficollis* was present with young probably not yet able to fly.

J.F. Reynolds, Box 40584, Nairobi.

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PARADISE FLYCATCHER TRAPPED IN A SPIDER'S WEB

Howell and Muangirwa (1975) refer to birds trapped in spiders' webs and invite further records.

On 14 April 1974 D.M. Francis and I were mist netting birds in isolated Acacia thickets on the edge of the Kafue Flats floodplain at Chunga in Lochinvar National Park, Zambia. The thickets being worked at the time contained several large masses of spiders' webs though I cannot name the species involved.

At one stage a female Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone viridis* blundered in to a web at about 5 m from the ground. No spiders were seen to approach the bird as it struggled to free itself.

The bird was being coaxed towards a mist-net at the time and might not have entered the web otherwise. We were sure however that the bird would not have escaped without our help.

REFERENCE:

Howell, K.M. & Muangirwa, C.J. 1975 Birds trapped in spiders' webs. *EANHS Bull.* 1975:67-68.

John J. Tucker, Box 8096, Woodlands, Lusaka, Zambia.

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STRIPED KINGFISHER AS HOST TO GREATER HONEY - GUIDE

Several species of birds have nested in the roof of our University house, including Grey-headed Sparrows *Passer griseus*, Fisher's and Yellow-collared Lovebirds *Agapornis fisheri* and *A. personata* and most recently Striped Kingfishers *Halcyon chelicuti*. There has always been fierce rivalry over this nest site particularly between the lovebirds and sparrows, which usually ends up with the sparrows moving out. I never saw sparrows or lovebirds attempt to take possession from the kingfishers, though our daughter reports seeing a Zanzibar Puff-back Shrike *Dryoscopus cubla affinis* attempt entry. This was an unusual choice of nest site as the preferred sites for those puff-backs which have been described is usually a fork of a tree, but interesting in that puff-backs are described as one of the hosts of the Greater Honey Guide *Indicaror indicator* in South Africa (Friedmann 1955).

Noises which we took to be the young kingfishers were certainly coming from the roof before 13 December 1974 because we told our son, on his arrival from U.K., that he would have to put up with the noise in his bedroom. We waited for the young kingfishers but never saw them. On 9 February 1975 we were aware of a continued plaintive calling in the avacado tree which is situated about 6 m from our house and saw a bird which seemed new to us yet somehow familiar. We identified it as a young Creater Honey-guide *I. indicator*. The yellow rictus was very obvious. It frequently was joined and greeted with the usual wing-lifting display by one or both of the kingfishers. It stayed in the garden calling frequently until 13 February; since that time we have not seen or heard it. At no time did we see the "hosts" feed it, but they sat within 25 cm of it on the same branch. Neither did we see the honey-guide enter the nest hole. The kingfishers are still using the nest hole and now young can be heard again. I am convinced that the noise from within the roof was the honey-guide but 60 days in the nest seems an incredibly long time. The nest could not be examined without at least a partial removal of the roof. Friedmann (1968) lists four reports of Striped Kingfishers as hosts (one may be a repeat of the first record), all from Rhodesia.

REFERENCES:

Friedmann, H. 1955 The Honey Guides. *U.S.N.M. Bull.* 208.

Friedmann, H. 1968 Additional data on Brood Parasitism in Honey-guides. *Proc. U.S. Nat. Mus.* Vol.124 (3648):2-3.

Norman Gardiner, Box 36065, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

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NEST BUILDING OF STRIPED SWALLOWS *HIRUNDO ABYSSINICA*

During the last week of April 1974 I was camping at the south end of Lake Magadi. In the nearby stunted Acacias were many old nests of Grey-headed Social Weavers *Pseudonigrita arnaudi* some of which were being renovated. Nearly every morning while having breakfast I saw a pair of Striped Swallows *Hirundo abyssinica* landing on old weavers' nests, pulling out lengths of dry grass and flying away with them, presumably to line their own nest in a 'karongo' a couple of hundred metres away. On some of the visits there were not very determined attempts made by the weavers to drive the swallows away.

J.F. Reynolds, Box 40584, Nairobi.

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A NOTE ON THE LAKE MAGADI AVOCETS AND OTHER BIRDS

On 15 June 1975 we visited Lake Magadi to survey the nesting birds and had a real red-letter day with the Avocets *Recurvirostra avosetta* which were nesting on the shingle near the hot springs.

In all, by just sitting in the car, we located ten nests and saw two pairs with three chicks each. The chicks were of very different sizes. Two pairs had just made nest scrapes, the female sitting but no eggs. The other nests contained C/1, C/1, C/3, C/1, C/4, C/1 and C/4. At two points there were two nests within a few metres of each other and one could say that these birds nest in a loose colony.

All eggs were typical pyriform, very evenly coloured with a background of putty-green with blotches of darker brown and black. Nests were interesting, some being a simple scrape 2 or 3 cm deep while others were well lined with dry grass stems, one had a flamingo feather. All nests were within a metre or so of the water with one exception which was on a shingle mound and each, with this one exception, was near some, to us, obvious landmark, a lump of soda, dried cow-pat or cattle/game foot prints.

The birds were extremely fearless and sat tight. We approached slowly in the car until we were within a few metres. A few birds left the nest as we appraoched and then gave a remarkable distraction display which consisted of the broken-wing act; the bird would spread its wings, droop one and shuffle around with its neck outstretched and almost at ground level. The other act was the broken-leg, the bird hopping around as if the leg were broken then tumbling onto its belly and swinging its head from side to side. As we left the site the birds quickly returned to their nests.

We returned to the hot springs the next weekend, 22 June and checked the nests again. We found the young of the previous Sunday. All nests with eggs now held C/3 or C/4. Two nests had been destroyed by some animal for the egg remains were in the nest with dried spilt yolk. One nest that had C/1 on 15 June had a broken egg in it but a female was sitting a few metres away on C/3, this was a new nest and we think the bird to be the owner of the destroyed C/1. One nest had been run-over by sight-seers who had gone off the track and we located two more new nests C/3 and C/4.

We did some photography at two nest where the birds acted splendidly at close range, one providing the broken-wing act and the other was very loath to leave the nest (the prints are good). to

While photographing we discovered that we were sitting only a few metres away from the nest of a Magadi Plover *Charadrius pallidus* with C/1. The nest, a bare scrape, was beside the car track of the previous Sunday, the landmark.

The Avocets and other birds gave the alarm and all deserted their nests with much noise when a Fish Eagle *Haliaeetus vocifer*, flew overhead. It was chased off by two Avocets which made repeated attacks on it causing it to slide slip and take evasive action. When the eagle was driven out of sight the clamour died down and the Avocets returned to their nests.

On our first visit, two pairs of Blacksmith Plover *Vanellus armatus* had young,again of very different sizes, while on our second visit we found a nest with C/1 right beside the main car track.

Quite remarkable was the nest with C/2 white eggs of the Speckled Pigeon *Columba guinea*, in a hollow at ground level, amongst the rocks of Bird Rock. The nest was very deeply lined with dry grass stems, unusual for a pigeon. We would not have found this nest if we had not stopped to search for ticks and the bird came in as we searched and so gave away the nest site. Another C/2 of this pigeon was located in the dug-out old nest of the Red and Yellow Barbet *Trachyphonus erythrocephalus* at the sandcliffs.

Lesser Flamingos *Phoenicopterus minor* and a few Greater *P. ruber* were present and we found a number of dead birds (no rings) and saw two eagles feeding on corpses, one a Tawny Eagle *Aquila rapax* and nearby another brown eagle, probably an immature but remarkably like the Greater Spotted *A. clanga* which we have seen near Magadi; however, this migrant species should not normally be present at this time of the year.

On a final note I would like to comment that on our first visit we found a two-car load of folk camped at Bird Rock, sunbathing, children paddling and a tape recorder blaring 'hot' music, and, of course, no birds in the vicinity. On the second visit the rock was a mass of birds including three Pratincoles *Glareola pratincola* which allowed us to photograph them at very close range.

G.R. Cunningham-van Someren, Box 24947, Nairobi.

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A NOTE ON DESTRUCTION OF NATURAL INDIGENOUS FORESTS

On 7 October 1974 a number of people interested in the preservation of our indigenous forests and their contained wildlife and flora met officials of the Forest Department (of Kenya) and members of the World Bank - economists, ecologists etc. who were making a reappraisal of the forests and forest potential. We put our case for the preservation of our forests and stressed the importance of rare endangered species which live in some of these, often unique, biospheres, e.g. Kakamega and Sokoke.

The Department officials, alas in my opinion, were not very forthcoming and we did not get a straight answer to any question put on forest policy. On the other hand, I understand that we got our message over to the World Bank though with what results only time will tell, but maybe they did intervene to save the North Nandi and adjacent forests. I have also heard that one of their recommendations was to the effect that a corridor of indigenous species should be planted so as to link the Kakamega with the North Nandi. I wonder if this will ever happen?

On Sokoke we could get no assurance that this special biosphere would be preserved and my most recent information (end of May) is that clearing of indigenous forest continues and plantings of exotics has been stepped up, particularly with Casuarina. There is talk of a new sawmill for export timber but officialdom would not enlighten us other than to say that Government wishes to exploit the forest.

Through the kindness of, and due to her deep interest in forests and their preservation, Alec Forbes-Watson and the writer were guests of Mrs Michaela Denis on an aerial survey flight over the forest areas on 29 December 1974. Our line of flight took us over Lake Naivasha, Eburru and the high country of Elburgon, the Mau, Londiani, and crossed the Kericho road passing over

Songhor and Tinderet. Clearing of indigenous forest and fires were seen at many points, encroachment along forest edges with many small shambas. On the edge of Kedowa most of the acacia forest has gone (this can also be seen from the Kericho road). Cultivation is being undertaken on remarkably steep slopes. Tinderet and South Nandi were being rapidly reduced, clearings were everywhere, felling and the fallen left to burn. New shambas everywhere. Between Rondo and the Ikulwa river a vast area of what used to be the Kakamega Forest has gone and this was confirmed on the ground during the weekend 30 May - 2 June, when the writer with Mrs J. Horne and J. Ellis visited Kakamega. Two years ago Mrs Horne and visiting ornithologists spent much time in this area studying the rare Blue-headed Bee-eater *Merops muelleri* near the Ikulwa River. Now the forest has gone and we did not see a single bird. The Kakamega Nature Reserve is but a tiny fragment of the whole Kakamega forest and is now surrounded by encroachment, shambas, cattle and probably fires.

We circled the threatened North Nandi Forest up on the escarpment east of Kakamega. Some months ago the newspapers carried tender notices for the felling and stumping of a great area of this forest and maybe public outcry and the World Bank have stayed the hand of the Forestry Department but we still have no definite assurance that this forest will remain inviolate. This area of forest appeared to us to be very dense, in parts with closed canopy and, as far as I am aware, it has never been studied in detail as to flora and fauna; while even the Forest Department in a newspaper statement said they did not know the constituent species of trees but that they would replace these "with more valuable species"!

On our return course we flew over parts of the South Nandi Forest again (the western edge) and here again was clear evidence of destruction and encroachment, and so on down along the Nandi escarpment via Leseru, Ainabkoi, Eldama and Kiptim where again clearing was going ahead. Vast tracts of forest had been destroyed or destruction was in progress. It appears that the system is to fell areas and then burn without saving any large timber for we saw great trunks of trees smouldering in these clearings. Much of this devastation can only be seen from the air, it is carefully screened from view from the main road.

The destruction was frightful and it seems that the somewhat comic word "re-afforestation" means one deliberately destroys one lot of trees and then plants the area with another lot of trees, exotics for preference.

What is so appalling in these areas and elsewhere up-country, is that felling is taking place right down to the river and stream edges, leaving slopes so steep that they should not be cleared atall but nevertheless are being cultivated (with maize). The destruction of the flora is naturally considerable. One would have thought that at least a riverine belt of natural trees would have been left along the streams. At one point along the Ikulwa River we found a recently felled fig tree which had more or less been dropped into the stream and on this we found and collected 13 species of orchid so we did not hesitate to take our fill of specimens, for better that they try and grow on trees in our gardens than be converted into charcoal. On another tree by the roadside we found seven species of orchid.

While we support the Presidential statement printed in the booklet prepared by the Forest Department for "Third World Forestry Day" 21 March 1974 which reads - "The Natural Resources of this Country - its Wildlife which offers such attraction to visitors from all over the world, the beautiful places in which these animals live, the mighty forests which guard the water catchment areas so vital to the survival of man and beast - are priceless heritage for the future. The Government of Kenya, fully realizing the value of its natural resources, pledges itself to conserve them for posterity with all the means at its disposal". We cannot understand the policy of the Forest Department since they will not take us into their confidence yet they too write in the same booklet, Page 14, "Let us therefore protect our natural world with its infinite variety of landscape, animals and plants, and its infinite capacity to uplift the human spirit", since it is - "essential to the well-being of all people and it is a part of the heritage of the people, deserving the respect of the people. Let us nurture and defend our forests and hand them over undamaged to the next generation." This is the stated policy but the action is rather different.

Quite recently there was a notice in the *Kenya Gazette* declaring that an area of forest some 9 km from Nairobi will, within 28 days from the time of the notice, "cease to be a forest". This will be quietly destroyed for what purpose only time will tell but, to me, this is not CONSERVATION, the primary function of a Forest Department, and such action does not accord with their public statement to "hand them over undamaged to the next generation".

In *The Standard* of 24 June there is an item headed "World Bank loan to help Kenya's development"; part of the article reads "In 1969.....forestry programme to develop 19,000 hectares of sawlog plantations and 9,000 hectares of plantations". Interpreted, this means that much natural forest has been sacrificed for these projects. Further on in the article, "the project includes afforestation of 38,000 hectares for sawlogs and 8,000 hectares for pulpwood plantations, further development of 120,000 hectares of established plantations". What this all means is uncertain but I feel that more and more natural indigenous forest will have to give way for the sawlogs and pulpwood plantations. We will agree with planting trees where no tree grew before but to replace one with another is altogether wrong.

For real devastation and the prelude to erosion etc., take a motor trip along the old Embu-Chuka-Meru road. Here the forest is being felled to the river edge, cultivation is underway on slopes almost too steep to stand on. This is probably more a problem for the Department of Agriculture and why they allow such cultivation is quite beyond comprehension; however, the felling of trees is involved so comes within the scope of this note. At Karen there are two well forested plots now both being destroyed, the timber being quickly and gladly carted off at so much a tree irrespective of species, or so much *kuni* at so many shillings a lorry load - no invoice given, no receipt demanded. The Income Tax man will see nothing of this cash.

G.R. Cunningham-van Someren, Box 24947, Nairobi.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

Several African countries, for example Nigeria, have flourishing ornithological societies which produce a widely-read bulletin or journal. In East Africa, which can surely boast more active ornithologists than most of these countries, bird interests are catered for mainly by the E.A.N.H.S., but there is no local ornithological publication as such. At present the Journal of the Society provides an outlet for long papers dealing with comprehensive bird studies, where publication delay is no great disadvantage, whilst the *EANHS Bulletin* can quickly take care of odd notes and records. However, there is a limited provision for short papers dealing, for example, with local distributional studies or migration work, and authors often have to resort to submitting work on East African topics to foreign journals, so that information becomes scattered and often unavailable to local would-be readers. One is frequently asked to give the *EANHS Bull.* a chance, and to send short ornithological papers there. A very good idea, but unfortunately it doesn't seem to have caught on with the *Bulletin* in its present form - too much of a mixture and still primarily a newsletter. In any case, not all Society members are interested in birds, and there have been complaints that the *Bulletin* already contains too much ornithological material.

A possible way to cater for different interests would surely be to split the functions currently served by the *EANHS Bull.* With little extra duplicating and circulation cost, a general newsletter of about twelve pages produced every two months could, I would have thought, have catered adequately for present non-ornithological requirements, whilst in addition, an ornithological bulletin of about fifteen to twenty pages could be produced quarterly. It may seem somewhat arbitrary to make special provision within the Society for ornithology, but one only has to look at the usual composition of the *EANHS Bull.*, for which most items received are in fact published, to see that this would be justified.

About three years ago the idea of an East African Bird report was suggested. Some of the functions proposed for this report were useful, and could in fact be served by an ornithological bulletin. An *annual* summary of records of unusual migrants for instance would be better than the scattering of incomplete information on the subject which appears at present, whilst regular reports on the Ringing and Nest Record Schemes, new distributional data, behavioural observations, preliminary results of wader trapping studies and seasonal summaries of activity at regularly worked migration points, such as Ngulia,are just some examples of material which could be much better catered for than is at present possible. I feel that a local ornithological bulletin is a 'must', and there are good reasons why this would be best established as an E.A.N.H.S. publication.

D.J. Pearson, Department of Biochemistry, Box 30197, Nairobi.

The letter from David Pearson contains a number of interesting suggestions. The comments which follow are my own personal ones, that is, they do not emanate from the Society's Executive Committee, which may or may not agree with them.

In the Ethiopian Region Gambia, Nigeria, Rhodesia, South Africa and Zambia have ornithological Societys; there may be others unknown to me. Kenya,'a bird paradise', Uganda and Tanzania have no ornithological Society as such; The E.A. N.H.S. earns the gratitude of local and visiting ornithologists by providing the framework of Nest Record and Ringing Schemes and also by publishing two periodicals which will take papers on ornithology. However, it is *not* an ornithological society and does not produce a purely ornithological periodical.

The *EANHS Bull.* (formerly *EANHS Newsletter*) has had a fair amount of criticism in its five years of life: 'too scientific' and 'too much on birds' being the most common complaints; in addition, some observers have told me that some ornithologists abroad will overlook the *Bulletin* as a scource of writing on birds because it is not primarily an ornithological publication. I feel that there is some truth in this view although recently, *Bulletin* articles have been abstracted in *Ibis* - showing that 'C.H.F.' at least does not overlook it as an ornithological source. Certainly, a quarterly East African ornithological bulletin would attract contributions from more ornithologists than does the present *Bulletin* - this must be good: workers on aspects of the East African avifauna would look to the new bulletin as a first step in their search of the literature and further, would perhaps be tempted to submit the results of their own studies to the new bulletin. Other critics complain that the 'newsletter aspects' of the *Bulletin* lower the standard (whatever that may mean) of the publication as a whole, making it unattractive to would-be contributors; I am sure that a number of people think along these lines.

The formula suggested by David Pearson, i.e. six *Bulletins* a year as at present, plus four purely ornithological issues of an as yet un-named bird journal, *should* keep everyone happy: people not interested in birds would receive precisely the same amount of material as now, at the two monthly intervals, with the bonus that they would not have to flip through the (to them) uninteresting articles on birds - their quarterly ornithological bulletin could be discarded. Bird people would be able to keep all the bird articles together for ease of reference and still maintain continuity with the existing *Bulletin*.

Members of the Society will want to air their views on Dr Pearson's suggestions in the Letters to the Editor section of the *Bulletin*, the correspondence received will be published in the normal way.

Graeme Backhurst, Box 29003, Kabete.

Sir,

HOW DOES THE SKIMMER WET ITS EGGS

R.J. Dowsett's note in the *Bulletin* of February 1975 raises several points. Unfortunately he does not state whether the birds on the Luangwa River or on Lake Turkana (Lake Rudolf) sit or stand over their eggs on return after foot wetting. If the birds do in fact sit on their eggs on return to the nest I cannot see how cooling, due to evaporation, could take place. The eggs would continue to be heated by the bird and insulated from the surrounding air by the bird's feathers. If the birds wet their eggs and then stood and shaded them then cooling could certainly take place. Unless this is a wetting and shading process then an increase in humidity would seem to be a much more likely reason for egg wetting than a decrease in temperature. Regarding the carrying of water I agree with your correspondent that their feet are unlikely water carriers as, most of the water would have dropped off before their return to the nest. If, as Turner and Gerhart state, the birds only wet their feet then it would seem a much more likely possibility that the bird uses this as a means of losing heat. If, as Dowsett states, the birds use their feet to splash their breast feathers this in itself could have been achieved much more easily by immersion, particularly easy I would have thought for a bird that has "close to water" flying ability second to none.

Norman Gardiner, Box 35065, Dar es Salaam.

Sir,

SKIMMER AT MAGADI

On 28 April 1974 I saw a Skimmer *Rhynchops flavirostris* flying over the south end of Lake Magadi, near the hot springs. I did not see it again on subsequent days.

J.F. Reynolds, Box 40584, Nairobi.

W.P.H. Duffus and D.J. Pearson ringed three Skimmers at Lake Magadi on 3 January 1975.

Ed.

Sir,

"THE NANDI BEAR"

I was interested to see the subject of the Nandi Bear revived in the May issue of the *Bulletin* 1975:54-55, Mrs Backhurst's article gives us a nice scientific viewpoint.

When I reached the Trans-Nzoia in 1925 the creature was often mentioned, but the stories were never at first or even at second hand. The nearest I ever got to it was a friend who once met someone who had once seen a footprint in a forest shown to him by a Nandi. A footprint on a forest floor would be only a vague shape anyway. Few settlers were naturalists and we were all busy getting started on our farms, but we were surrounded by a fascinating and unknown flora and fauna, and there were no text books. There was a tendency to call any unexplained and half-seen mammal a Nandi Bear - in jest.

Personally I have a theory that the Nandi Bear represents a folk-memory of the Gorilla. Bears do not belong to Africa, but were familiar, by hearsay, to settlers and officials brought up in Europe, whereas Gorillas would be associated with West Africa or the Congo. Therefore a vague hearsay description of a Gorilla would, to them, suggest a bear - the dark and terrifying aspect, the upright stance, the shape of the foot, for instance. It is now better known that at one time the forests of West Africa extended as far east as the Rift Valley. The Mau, Nandi, Kakamega and Chepalungu forests must have only recently been isolated from each other and from the forests of Uganda, themselves at one time more widespread. It was only in the nineteen-thirties, I believe, that gorillas were discovered in the forests of Western Uganda. It would not be surprising if the parents or grandparents of Nandi who contacted early officials and settlers knew of the gorilla, not yet quite died out in their forests.

I recall the names of two mystery animals, the 'Chemosit' and the 'Kerit'. I have retained a copy of an article in the E.A.N.H.S. *Journal* of July 1913 describing an unknown, but not very bear-like animal, from an East of Rift area. I would much like to read the other articles from early *Journals* refered to by Mrs Backhurst. Are there no vintage settlers or officials who could tell us of their experiences or theories?

In 1934 I collected West African orchids near Kaimosi, which is a reminder of how recently the forests were connected. Since 1925 a lot has been learnt about Western Kenya which may throw some light on the mystery. It would be nice if the subject could be aired in the *Bulletin*.

Mrs E.M. Tweedie, 32 Mount Ararat Road, Richmond, Surrey, England.

Sir,

I have recently read the article about the habitat of the rock hyrax by J.B. Sale in *Jl E. Africa nat. Hist. Soc.* XXV,3(112) of January 1966. Though I am a total amateur in matters relating to natural history, a note about an apparently unrecorded habitat-occurrence of the hyrax may be of interest.

Dr Sale does not mention any occurrences on the coast. While I was working in the Kilwa region of Tanzania (1957-65) there were large numbers of hyraces living in holes in the wave-cut coral cliff on the island known as Songo Mnara. They were observed feeding in the trees round about and a number were always to be seen on the tops of the walls of the ruined settlements near their colony. The number was much reduced in, I think, 1965; when I remarked on this to one of the inhabitants he said that this was due to an exceptionally high tide in the previous months which had drowned a large number of them in their holes.

I do not know whether these were *Procavia* or *Heterohyrax*. They were about the size of a fully grown rabbit and were quite good eating - in view of their numbers and the erosion they were causing to the walls of the interesting ruins I obtained permission from the Game Department to shoot a few of them, other meat of any sort being lacking.

Neville Chittick, British Institute in Eastern Africa,
Box 30710, Nairobi.

Sir,

HYBRID *PAPILLIO CARDANUS* X *P. PHORCAS*

With reference to my note in the *Bulletin* 1975:67, Professor Sir Cyril Clarke has very kindly sent me colour prints of these remarkable butterflies. The prints have been mounted and will be available for viewing in the Library of the National Museum.

G.R. Cunningham - van Someren, Box 24947, Nairobi.

Sir,

SCARCE BOOKS IN MUSEUM BOOKSHOP

The commercial book sellers of Nairobi are unwilling to tie up their capital in books for which the demand is limited. This creates difficulties for naturalists who wish to obtain such books. The Museum shop is now experimentally stocking several books including: P.R.O. Bally *The Genus Monadenium*, R.O. Williams *Useful and Ornamental Plants of Zanzibar*, G.W. Reynolds *Aloes of Tropical Africa & Madagascar*, which cannot be bought elsewhere in East Africa.

It is hoped that once it becomes known as a place to find unusual books, the shop may not only help the Museum finances but also greatly assist naturalists.

J.B. Gillett, Box 45166, Nairobi.

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REVIEW

NATURAL HISTORY PHOTOGRAPHY edited by D.M. Turner Ettlinger, 1974. London: Academic Press. Pp. 395 with numerous black and white plates, diagrams, charts etc. UK price £8.80.

A glance at the list of contents will indicate the comprehensive scope of this book. The editor has persuaded a number of acknowledged experts in their particular field to write about the technique of taking photographs of a wide variety of natural history subjects, some of which have never been written about in detail as far as I am aware. Mention may be made of the monographs by Harold Hems: Small Vertebrates, Sdeuard Bisserot: Bats, Frank Blackburn: The use of play-back tape, David and Katie Urry: Birds in flight, John Wooley: Photographs in caves, amongst others.

A general publication such as this cannot be expected to cover each subject in as great a depth as an entire book on say, bird photography; but the title under review is full of expert know-how and can be read with great benefit by both beginners and advanced workers. The latter may indeed find many suggestions not only to diversify their particular hobby but to make a new approach to it.

I would like to draw the attention of specially the East African reader to two chapters. Firstly, the admirable introduction by the editor, with an emphasis on the appendix in it, entitled "The Nature Photographers' Code of Practice." And secondly, the excellent and instructive article on "Tropical Conditions" by our own John Reynolds. Nature photography in the tropics is very different from its practice in more temperate climates. The author makes some very sound recommendations as to how to overcome these differences.

Having said all this, I must admit that I am concerned at the high price of the book, even in these days of escalating costs, bearing in mind that it has no colour plates. A copy is available in the Society's Library and I suggest that a prospective purchaser has a look at it first, before deciding whether to buy the book.

John Karmali, A.R.P.S., Box 42202, Nairobi.

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RINGING NEWS

The 1974/75 ringing year ended on 30 June. I would be grateful if all ringers who have not yet sent in their schedules for this year would pleas do so as soon as possible. Schedules have not been received from the following: D. Caffyn, M. Goddard and J.F. Harper.

I am anxious to obtain the present addresses of the following ex-members of the Society: G.N. Harrington, M. Reid and E.R. Waterhouse; any information to me please.

Graeme Backhurst, Ringing Organizer, Box 29003, Kabete.

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Week-end at "Island Camp" Baringo, first week-end in October. Please see under "Functions" for further details.

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EXCURSION TO TSAVO EAST NATIONAL PARK 10 - 11 MAY 1975

About two dozen members and their children undertook the long journey (325 km from Nairobi), undeterred by the ever-rising cost of petrol, to meet at the Tsavo Park Education Centre almost immediately behind Voi Gate. The Centre, consisting of two dormitories (30 bed and 20 bed), washrooms, do-it-yourself kitchen, lecture hall, office etc., was set up by the National Parks with finance originating from the Washington-based African Wildlife Leadership Foundation. It enables some 15000 visitors per year, mostly Kenya students and school children, to take part in game drives, talks, discussions and filmshows concerning wildlife conservation to which otherwise they would hardly have access. E.A.N.H.S. members were privileged to enjoy its minimal rates (50 cts park entrance fee plus Shs. 2/50 per person for accomodation and use of other facilities). One feature of the Centre which deserves praise is that the diesel generator supplying electricity has been installed so far away that no noise whatsoever spoils the visitors' appreciation of the noises of an African night, in marked contrast to what one has to put up with in some of the more thoughtlessly constructed lodges and country hotels.

After most of us had arrived, the Centre's "Conservation Education" bus set out for a game drive towards Lugard's Falls. The first half-hour showed virtually no game at all, passing through depressingly dry bush country (Voi Safari Lodge, which I visited a month later, had recorded only 125 mm of rain by then since the beginning of 1975, while its annual total rainfall should average 4 - 500 mm). Subsequently however, following the Mbololo River bed closely, we had one of the most rewarding "game runs" I can remember: over 60 elephants, a large buffalo herd, ten giraffe, a dozen zebra, some gerenuk, ostrich, baboon troops, a kudu and a rhino, all seen within an hour or so till we reached Crocodile Point; there, five medium sized of these reptiles were basking in the sun. Lugard's Falls was our second stop to get out of the bus, and from a nature lover's viewpoint it is gratifying to hear from the experts that the Athi and Galana Rivers for once are not judged economic propositions to be exploited in modern Man's insatiable quest for new sources of energy. So perhaps these Falls will remain as they are for many years to come.

The late afternoon return drive took us past more game even, with oryx as an addition and then to the small Tsavo East Orphanage where rhino mother "Push me" with her baby, and four elephants are currently kept in enclosures (i cannot quite believe that the latter are said to be set free every now and then but obediently return at dusk from their pastures) while over a hundred guinea fowl roam the near-by bushes.

After a campfire outside the Education Centre under a fabulously starlit sky, the night brought some rain at last and a dull grey cloud remained throughout Sunday morning. Again in the bus, after an early morning bird-walk, we passed Tsavo Research Centre, currently staffed by two zoologists only, with its depressing "ossarium" of thousands of elephant and hundreds of rhino jaws, and many skulls arranged outside the houses. Most of it, so we were told, remains from the 1967 drought, while our African guide would not commit himself as to poaching figures but said that they were down from 1973 which had been the worst year in that respect. Currently Tsavo Research Project is concerned with a continuous census, much of it from the air, of the elephant population, and a study of the movements of individual bulls by fitting them with radio transmittors, an investigation of feeding habits and their inter- relationship with vegetation, and similar studies on Tsavo Park's 350 bird species.

Voi River seems to have remained dry throughout this year's long rains, so not much game wa seen on our way to Aruba, a small herd of eland added to our previous list of species. In addition to the mammals, over 70 species of birds were seen by members. Our special thanks are due to Mr Anderson Koyo, who proved an able guide and answered many of our questions, bsides organizing our programme very well.

Franz Rader, Box 30560, Nairobi.

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LECTURE ON "NATURAL RESOURCES IN PERSPECTIVE"

Mr Michel Baumer, Director of UNEP's Programme Division 2, "Ecosystems and Natural Resources", addressed an audience of 35 persons in the Museum's Ford Lecture Hall on 12 May, on a subject which has gained notoriety through the First Report elaborated for the Club of Rome on "The Limits of Growth", and Prof. Paul Ehrlich's standard textbook on *Population, Resources, Environment* (soon to be published in its 3rd, updated edition). Obviously such a vast "problematique" (as the Club of Rome calls it) cannot be compressed easily within a lecture lasting 45 minutes, still less so in this brief review. A few startling facts mentioned by Mr Baumer: The first instance to show that an individual source of pollution could have world-wide effects was the aftermath of the eruption of Krakatoa volcano in 1883 when enormous amounts of sea water and red-hot lava hitting each other evaporated in a huge series of explosions. In 1970, the U.S. Council for Environmental Quality estimated the cost of air pollution damage to American society, in all its ramifications, at $15000 million. When the Communists took over China in 1949-50, they initiated careful research into the utility of 145 races of sheep then existing in their country, and decided eventually that only about 30 were worth keeping. All the other breeds were subsequently slaughtered, and discouraged from mating and being systematically exterminated. A refugee family however, took one of the unsuitable ovine races to North Vietnam - where it has turned out to be the highest yielding breed today; which shows once more what damage Man can do by tampering with Nature's superior wisdom. In the Indian Ocean particularly, fishing fleets are growing fast, not because there is a vast amount of fish to be harvested, but for considerations of a strategic and military nature. These are just a few examples of the "serious imbalance" the world is coming to, due to the activities of Man, "probably the only species destroying the environment on which it depends" (though elephants compete with man in this respect, as in some others).

One would like to hear Mr Baumer lecturing on a more specific topic some time in the future; two themes he might be eminently qualified to deal with being: "Environment thought and Nature protection in France, past and present" or "The Sahel drought and its implications for arid areas, land use and environmental policies in Kenya.

Franz Rader, Box 30560, Nairobi.

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SOCIETY FUNCTIONS

9/10 August 1975: Week-end field excursion to the Magadi area. Leaders: Mr & Mrs P. Kenyon. Members should be self-contained with all camping equipment, plenty of water, food and petrol for about 300 km there is no petrol available at Magadi. Camp will be at an altitude of about 650 m (2000 ft) and conditions hot. Anti-malaria precautions are necessary. Those wishing to take part please fill in the enclosed slip and return to Mr P. Kenyon, Box 19163, Nairobi not later than 1 August. Details will be sent to those participating.

Monday 11 August 1975 at 5.15 p.m.: At the National Museum Hall, Nairobi. Mr Ian Parker will talk on "Ivory".

Sunday, 24 August 1975: Day outing to Ol Doinyo Sapuk, Leader Mrs V. Bowles. Please meet at the National Museum at 8.45 a.m. and bring a picnic lunch. Bird watching, Plants also interesting on the mountain.

Monday 8 September 1975 at 5.15 p.m.: At the Museum Hall, Nairobi. Dr John Dixon, Deputy Director, Science, I.C.I.P.E., will talk on "What goes on at ICIPE" (Dirty tricks and mostly sexual at that).

26/27/28 September 1975: Week-end field trip to Bushwhackers Safari Camp on the Athi River near Kibwezi. Members wishing to visit this interesting area on the Athi River will find there on this trip, committee members familiar with the plants and birds of the area. For bookings, please contact Mrs Jane Stanton, P.O. Kibwezi, soonest. Bushwhackers has 'self service' bandas for two or more people at up to Shs.25/- per person. The area is hot, anti-malaria precautions are necessary. 225 km from Nairobi, mostly tarmac. Camping also available.

3/4/5/ October 1975: Island Camp, Lake Baringo. This delightful luxury tented camp has been offered to members at the following rates per night for any or all the dates mentioned: Shs.190/- double tent, full board. Shs.120/- single. Transfer to island Shs.20/- per person return, children half price. 280 km from Nairobi, the last 80 not tarmac; cars are parked on the mainland,and guests transported to the camp by boat. Accomodation for 30 people only. First come first served. Please send the enclosed booking slip with payment *in full* by cheque made out to Island Camp, Baringo, to Mrs A.L. Campbell, Box 14469, Nbi.

Monday 13 October 1975 at 5.15 p.m.: At the National Museum Hall, Nairobi. Mr G. Rathbun will give an illustrated lecture on "Elephant Shrews".

18/19/20 October 1975: Week-end field trip to Mayers' farm, Nandi Hills. Details later.

Sunday 9 November 1975: Dr J. Kokwaro of the University of Nairobi, Botany Dept. will hold a field demonstration on pressing and identification of plants. Please meet at the Museum at 9 a.m.

Monday 10 November 1975 at 5.15 p.m.: At the National Museum Hall, Nairobi. Dr T. Hefnawy of ICIPE will give a talk on "Factors influencing Ticks' Behaviour".

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NEW MEMBERS JUNE/JULY 1975

Full Members.

Mr A.E. Banner, Box 47577, Nairobi.
Mrs Cocki Bartlema, Box 30776, Nairobi.
Mrs N. Chance, Box 43387, Nairobi.
Mrs P.A. Clifford, Box 28, Kiambu.
Mr J. Crees, Box 579, Thika.
Mrs Martin David, Box 47543, Nairobi.
Mr D.W. Goddard, Box 30345, Nairobi.
Mrs G.M. Hagberg, Box 14805, Nairobi.
Mr M.D. Kendall, Box 41221, Nairobi.

Mr E. Kervinen, Y.M.C.A., Box 30330, Nairobi.
Mr D. Klein, Dept. of Human Anatomy, Box 30197, Nairobi.
Miss A. Lohding, P.O. Kabete.
Dr R.S. Lowery, Kenyatta College, Box 43844, Nairobi.
Miss D. Nightingale, Box 30017, Nairobi.
Mrs M.I. Van der Ent, Box 17, Ruiru.

Overseas:

Dr Jon Gerrard, 954-15th Ave. S.E. Minneapolis 55414, U.S.A.
Dr Jean-Pierre van der Gweigh, B.P. 786, Kigali, Rwanda.

Junior:

David Fuggle, Box 41412, Nairobi.

NEW MEMBERS AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 1975

Full Members:

Mr J.T. Adams, Box 14691, Nairobi.
Mrs T. Aloo, Box 74, Kikuyu.
Mrs D. Barclay, Box 30144, Nairobi.
Mr J. Buruga, Botany Dept. Makerere University, Box 7062, Kampala.
Mr Sajjad Butt, Box 40904, Nairobi.
Mr B.R. Devani, Box 42900, Nairobi.
Mr D.B. Dow, Box 30009, Nairobi.
Mrs J. Eliot, Box 42347, Nairobi.
Mr H. Frey, Box 29053, Nairobi.
Mr A. Hill, National Museum, Box 40658, Nairobi.
Dr D.S. Holder, Fairview Hotel, Box 40658, Nairobi.
Mr Kunzo Kawaguchi, Box 30335, Nairobi.
Mr P.B. Leckie, Box 1, Koru.
Mrs I Leveridge, Box 30009, Nairobi.
Mr D.J. Ligon, Bushwhackers Safari Camp, P.O. Kibwezi.
Miss K. McDonald, Box 9370, Nairobi.
Mrs H. Moore, Box 14984, Nairobi.
Mr J. Njoroge, YMCA Crafts Training Centre, Box 17073, Nairobi.
Mr M. Patel, Box 45023, Nairobi.
Mrs F. Pell-Smith, Box 24913, Nairobi.
Miss E. Potgieter, Greenacres School, Box 46919, Nairobi.
Mr J.A. Potter, Box 30301, Nairobi.
Dr M.R. Stanley-Price, Galana Game & Ranching Ltd., Box 76, Malindi.
Miss M.L. Watts, Box 30099, Nairobi.

Overseas:

Dr Ake Holm, Inst. of Zoology, Box 561, 751 22 Uppsala, Sweden.

Junior:

Micheal Sagini, Box 14738, Nairobi.

Institutional:

Greenacres School, Box 46919, Nairobi.

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FOR SALE

Two Philips Speakers. Super Compact Full Range. Type EG0417. 5" Woofer, 2¼" Tweeter. 8 ohms impedance. Only for sale because the turntable/amplifier stolen. Shs. 500/- the pair. Please send P.C. to G.C. Backhurst,.Box 29003, Kabete.

WANTED

E. Afr. Wildl. J. Vol.2 (1964), Vol.3 (1965) and Vol.6 (1968). Wanted by Mr J-P. d'Huart, c/o G.C. Backhurst, Box 29003, Kabete.

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NOTICE

With this issue of the *Bulletin* is enclosed a notice of two of the Society's *Journal* parts. Both are papers by a former Director of the Museum, Dr R.H. Carcasson. They proved very valuable and we soon ran out of copies. Our Committee has now given the copyright to Messrs. R.W. Classey in return for a number of copies of the new reprints to be sold for the benefit of the Society.

Purchasers outside East Africa should order direct from R.W. Classey, Ltd., Park Road, Faringdon, Oxon, SN7 7DR, England.

Local purchasers who wish to put their names down for copies to be obtained here should notify the Librarian. Reviews of these new reprints will appear in the *Bulletin* when our copies arrive.

Members are reminded (and new members are informed) that copies of Agnew's *Upland Kenya Wildflowers* can be obtained through the Library at a special reduced rate - Shs. 136/-. Those wishing to purchase copies should notify the Librarian, bringing or enclosing Shs.136/-. For a copy to be sent by post, please add 6/30 for postage.

P.M. Allen, Librarian.

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SOME RECENT PERIODIC LITERATURE AVAILABLE IN THE LIBRARY

Andrews, P. & Van Couvering, J.A.H. 1975 Palaeoenvironments in the East African Miocene. *Contrib. Primate. Basle.* 5:62-103.

Behrensmeyer, A.K. 1975 The Taphonomy and paleoecology of Plio-plaistocene vertebrate assemblages East of Lake Rudolf, Kenya. *Bull. Mus. Comp. Zool.* 146:474-578.

Bolton, B. 1975 A revision of the Ant genus *Leptogenys* Roger . . . in the Ethiopian Region, with a review of the Malagasy species. *Bull. Brit. Mus. (Nat. Hist.) Ent.* 31:237-305.

Brenan, J.P.M. 1974 A new subspecies of *Albizzia tanganyicensis* from Kenya (Notes on Mimosoideae:XII) *Kew Bulletin* 29:717-719.

Bruce, A.J. 1975 Coral reef shrimps and their colour patterns. *Endeavour* 34:23-27.

Eldredge, N. 1975 Survivors from the good old, old, old days. ("living fossils"). *Natural History, New York.* 84: No.2:60-69.

Ferrara, F. 1974 On some interesting isopods from Tanzania. *Monitore Zool. Ital.* Suppl.V:309-324.

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Homewood, K.M. 1975 Monkeys on a riverbank. *Natural History, New York.* 84: No.1:68-73.

Johanson, D.C. 1974 The quest for early man in Ethiopia. *Explorer* 16: No.4:4-11.

Largen, M.J., Koxk, D. & Yalden, D.W. 1974 Catalogue of the mammals of Ethiopia. I. Chiroptera. *Monitore Zool. Ital.* N.S. Suppl. V:221-298.

Leuthold, W. & Leuthold, B.M. 1975 Patterns of social groupings in ungulates of Tsavo National Park, Kenya. *J. Zool.* 175:405-420.

Magor, J.I. & Ward, P. 1972 Illustrated descriptions, distribution maps and bibliography of the species of *Quelea* (Weaver birds:Ploceidae). *Trop. Pest. Bull.* 1:1-23.

Monod, Th. 1974 Note sur quelques *Acacias* d'Afrique et du Proche-orient. *Bull. I.F.A.N.* Ser.A. 36:642-669.

Wood, L.J. 1974 Pre-colonial markets in East Africa. *Nigerian Geographical J.* 17:22-30.

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This offers you free entry to the National Museum, Nairobi; free lectures, films, slide shows or discussions every month in Nairobi; field trips and camps led by experienced guides; free use of the joint Society-National Museum Library (postal borrowing is also possible); reciprocal arrangements with the Uganda Society's Library in the Uganda Museum, Kampala; family participation: wives and children of members may attend most Society functions; one copy of the *EANHS Bulletin* every month; a copy of each *Journal* published during your period of membership; the Society controls the ringing of birds in East Africa and welcomes new ringers; the Society runs an active Nest·Record Scheme; activities such as plant mapping and game counting are undertaken on a group basis. Membership rates are given at the foot of this page.

JOURNAL

The Society publishes *The Journal of the East Africa Natural History Society and National Museum.* Each issue consists usually of one paper, however, sometimes two or more short papers may be combined to form one number. The aim of this method of presentation is to ensure prompt publication of scientific information; a title page is issued at the end of each year so that the year's papers may be bound together. Contributions, which should be typed in double spacing on one side of the paper, with wide margins, should be sent to the Secretary, Box 44486, Nairobi, Kenya. Authors receive twenty-five reprints of their article free, provided that these are ordered at the time the proofs are returned.

E.A.N.H.S. BULLETIN

This is a duplicated monthly magazine which exists for the rapid publication of short notes, articles, letters and reviews. Contributions, which may be written in clear handwriting or typed, should be sent to the Editor (*EANHS Bulletin*), P.O. Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi, Kenya. Line drawings will be considered if they add to the value of the article, photographs cannot be published.

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NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Members of the Society (and non-members) are asked to follow these simple instructions when writing articles or letters for submission to the *Bulletin*. The *Bulletin* is presented each month in a duplicated format: the paper size is 20.5×23 cm (10×8 inches), line drawings can be reproduced but the area should not be more than 17.5×23 cm. Lettering on figures should preferably be in 'Letraset', neatly done in Indian ink or left blank: if the last method is followed, the lettering should be indicated on an overlaying sheet and should *not* be done on the figure. Figures should be prepared on good quality white writing paper and not on Bristol Board or other thick material. Whenever plants or animals are mentioned the scientific name should also be given but not in parenthesis. Trinomials should not be used unless there is good reason to do so. Author's names of species are not required.

Contributions may be typed (preferably) or written clearly and should be sent to: G. C. Backhurst, Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi, Kenya. Receipt of contributions will be acknowledged.

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THE ECOLOGY AND GENETICS OF THE BUTTERFLY "BROWN VEINED WHITE" *BELENOIS AUROTA* FABRICIUS (PIERIDAE)

Migration in the Pieridae has been observed in several species such as *Catopsilia florella* (Smith 1975). In Uganda, large swarms of the butterfly *Belenois aurota* were seen between 15 - 28 May 1975 moving in various directions. It was observed that the swarms extended as far as Jinja and possibly beyond (a distance of over 100 km from Kampala), and also a similar distance towards Masaka, west of Kampala. The species appeared to consist of two main colour forms; a light coloured form and a dark coloured form. A colony of this species was then found to be breeding in the Botany Garden, Makerere on the plant *Capparis fascicularis* var. *elaeagnoides* (Gilg.) de Wolf (Capparidaceae). This plant is known to be indigenous and to occupy deciduous bushland and thicket, upland dry evergreen and riverine forest, grassland with scattered trees, and sometimes termite-hills (Elffers *et al.* 1964).

The eggs of the butterfly *B. aurota* are laid on the young leathery leaves of *C. fascicularis* var. *elaeagnoides* in batches of 60 to 100. When first laid, the barrel shaped eggs are white but later on they turn yellowish-orange. The larvae are small (approximately 2 - 2.5 mm) when they hatch, and are orange green in colour. As they continue moulting their colour turns dirty green, and perfectly match the background colour of older leaves of the food plant. The pupae on the other hand, are whitish, again a colour that matches dried twigs of the host plant. The adults, which hatch in about five weeks, were observed to visit several flowers, among which were *Plumbago zeylanica* L., an indigenous plant in Uganda, *Duranta repens* L. (Verbenaceae) and *Sonchus oleraceus* L. In a brood of eggs from an unknown female parent that had been obtained from the host plant in the Botany Garden, Makerere, and reared in the laboratory, a total of six dark forms and one light form of the imago were hatched, confirming the assumption that the two colour forms belonged to the same species. The pattern of inheritance has not yet been worked out.

An analysis of the different colour forms sampled during the swarming period showed that the frequency of the dark colour form was 33.5%. The sex ratios did not deviate significantly from a 1:1 ratio (P 99%). It is intended to investigate the genetics of the colour forms.

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Elffers, J., Graham, R.A. & de Wolf, G.P. 1964 Capparidaceae in *Flora of Tropical East Africa*. Edited by Hubbard, C.E. & Milne-Redhead, E. Crown Agents, London.

Smith, D.A.S. 1975 A massive migration of the African migrant butterfly *EANHS Bull.* 1975:73-74.

J.H. Buruga, Department of Botany,
Box 7062, Kampala, Uganda.

LONG - LIVED LESSER FLAMINGO

When in Britain recently I was given, by Mr C.J. Mead, a copy of a ringing recovery of a Lesser Flamingo *Phoenicopterus minor* ringed during the great operation at Lake Magadi on 30 October 1962. I am cited as the ringer, though in all probability it was done by one of the large team, notably Alan Root, who took part in this mammoth exercise, which completely exhausted the British Museum stocks of Monel rings of that size for that year.

The bird was recoverd by Mr D. Clay, Dept. of Agriculture, The University, Salisbury, Rhodesia. It had been dead several months when found, so that it was probably over 11½ approaching 12 years old. It is by far the oldest of all the ringing recoveries of those Lesser Flamingos so far, the previous oldest being a subadult found at Sodere, Awash Valley, Ethiopia, and reported in Brown & Root *Ibis* 1971. Unfortunately, however this twelve year old bird provided no new knowledge of movements, for it was found where ringed, at Lake Magadi, in a year when movement away from the usual haunts in the East African Rift has been abnormal. The recovery date was 24 September 1974.

When so few ringing recoveries were obtained despite the massive scale (8000 or more) of the ringing operation of 1962, it was feared that the rings must all have rotted off the legs of the flamingos; as apparently happened in Galapagos with gulls frequenting alkaline pans. However, the fact that one ring at least has lasted all this time suggests that others also must have, and that it is worth renewing the search for rings placed above the tibio-tarsal joint on living flamingos. Despite a constant watch for these, I have never seen one, nor has anyone else in recent years to my knowledge.

Leslie Brown,
Box 24916, Karen, Kenya.

It may be of interest that a Blacksmith Plover *Vanellus armatus*, which was ringed as a chick at Magadi on 12 June 1964 was retrapped there on 11 March 1973 (adult male). The monel 'Nairobi' ring, of the same material and from the same manufacturer as the B.T.O. flamingo rings, was perfect. The only ring corrosion seen in the East African Scheme has been confined to rings (aluminium and Monel) carried by small waders where, in some cases, almost total obliteration has taken less than four months to develop.

It is now thought that the cause of this corrosion is due mainly to stresses within the ring - small diameter rings are more highly stressed than larger ones. Water containing dissolved salts is of course necessary for corrosion to take place.

Ed.

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RANGE EXPANSION OF THE QUAIL PLOVER

Mackworth-Praed & Grant show the range of the Quail Plover *Ortyxelos meiffrenii* as no further south than the extreme north of Kenya. Alec Forbes-Watson collected two males (which are now in the National Museum) between Buchuma and Aruba at 3.30'S, 38.55'E. on the night of 15 April 1967. The birds were caught by hand on the track during exceptionally heavy rain; Britton 1970 gives the weight of these two birds (Some non-passerine bird weights from East Africa. *Bull.Br.Orn.Club* 90:142-144; & 152-154) but approximated the locality as Voi and did not state the exact date.

Since January 1975 I have seen twenty individuals in Tsavo East south of the Galana River. All but six were single birds, the remaining six were in pairs. They have occurred in a variety of habitats from open grassland (one record from Ndara Plains at 3.35'S) to quite dense bushland with some trees. I have two or three records for each month from January to July. It would not surprise me to find that they are quite common throughout the intervening area. Almost all my records are of birds flushed at my feet, and this may explain why they have not been seen by casual observers to the area.

This extension of range south is being shown by some other birds too; for example Somali Ostrich *Struthio camelus molybdophanes* (now quite common over all Tsavo East) and the Somali Bee-eater *Merops revoillii* (see Leuthold, *EANHS Bull.* 1973:101, and I have about 40 records in the last nine months from Tsavo East).

Peter Lack, Box 14, Voi, Kenya.

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NESTING COLONY OF MARABOU STORKS AT SHINYANGA, TANZANIA

Accounts of Marabou Storks *Leptoptilos crumeniferus* breeding in Tanzania are possibly more numerous than formerly realised, but the present status of many reported colonies is unknown.

North (1943) described a colony 12 miles south of Moshi (N. Tanzania) in tall "Mvule" trees (*Chlorophora excelsa* (Welw.) Benth & Hook.f.) along the Kikuletwa River and at Kalambo Falls on the Zambia-Tanzania border (near S.E. Lake Tanganyika) the birds have been reported nesting on the ledges of Cliffs (Benson & White 1957, Condry 1967). Accounts of breeding also exist at Lake Manyara (Morgan-Davies 1964) and mention is made by C.H.B. Grant in North (*op. cit.*) of breeding in the Kondoa-Irangi district (Central Tanzania) and from Kafisia area in the southern Ubende area of Kigoma district (Western Tanzania). There is also mention of storks nesting in the lower part of the Great Ruaha River and at Kiteti in Masai District; in the Mikumi controlled area near Doma of Kilosa district and in the Mhandu Hills of Kahama district (Thomas 1960, 1962).

On 25 July 1975, a small colony of nesting Marabou Storks was noted at the north side of Shinyanga town (Shinyanga Region) near the main road across from the railway yard. Nests and fully feathered young birds were observed in four relatively low (*c.* 10 m) flat-topped Acacia trees situated in two groups approximately 300 m apart. In the first tree of the northerly group 8 nests were counted and only one fledgling. The second tree contained 13 nests with a total of two fledgling birds. In the other tree group, 5 nests were observed in the first tree with two fledglings and in the second tree, which contained 7 nests there were two young birds in one nest and one in another. All the young birds were fairly mature but none old enough to fly. Two broken eggs found under one of the trees was evidence of some mortality.

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Condry, W. 1967 *Birds and Wild Africa.* London:Collins.

Morgan-Davies, A.M. 1964 Notes on some breeding birds at Lake Manyara National Park. *Tanganyika Notes & Rec.* (62):96-104.

North, M.E.W. 1943 Breeding of the Marabou Stork in East Africa. *Ibis* 85:190-198.

Thomas, D.K. 1960 Bird notes on breeding in Tanganyika. 1958-1959. *Tanganyika Notes & Rec.* (55):225-243.

----------- 1962 Further notes on birds breeding in Tanganyika. *Tanganyika Notes & Rec.* (58 & 59):197-202.

Slim Easton, Box 129, Mwanza, Tanzania.

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REDSHANKS AT LAKE MAGADI

As the Redshank *Tringa totanus* is now regarded as a rare but regular visitor to Kenya, it is worth recording that I saw two feeding in the shallows near the hot springs at Lake Magadi (south end) on 3 August 1975 and one the following day.

Incidently, this is only the third time I have seen this wader inland in East Africa and my first inland sighting in Kenya.

J.F. Reynolds, Box 40584, Nairobi.

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THE OMNIVOROUS BULBUL

J.G. Williams was right. "You will soon have a tame bulbul sitting on your shoulder," he said.

It was three small girls who knocked on the door one Sunday afternoon with a "Please Mr Preston, can you look after this little bird." This little bird was a very small Yellow-vented Bulbul *Pycnonotus barbatus*, barely fledged with a tail no more than half an inch long. It sat dumbly on a twig in the cardboard box, and I thought that it would surely not survive the night. It did, and the next day was very quick to learn about plastic syringes full of squashed pawpaw and banana. It was a case of waiting, at first, for its mouth to open and then being quick enough to poke the syringe in and discharge it, but before long, two sets of conditioned reflexes set in: bulbul tweets, I get out the syringe: bulbul sees syringe, mouth opens. A time consuming occupation, feeding a bulbul. At least we had not been asked to look after an insectovore. We did begin to wonder some time later, exactly what it was we had been asked to look after.

As the days went by, the tail became visibly longer and we went over to feeding with a pair of tweezers. After a diet of banana and pawpaw and bread, recommended by Mr Williams, the other items crept in by chance. The first day that Splat, now christened for obvious reasons, saw avocado pear, he (she) would eat nothing else. The next day, tomato appeared on the menu. Bread, butter, jam, lumps of peel from the marmalade. Olives from the dry martini. Cheese, biscuits, cake. But the quivering wings and wide open beak gave the most excited display when minced meat came by. We were positively attacked for a crumb of raw mince, and in a manner out of all proportion to size. Now the diet has stabilised. It eats whatever we are eating and preferably from the fork or the plate. The toast, half way to the mouth, is far more interesting than the crumb put on the window sill. Egg and chips far more exciting than chopped tomato in a saucer. There are times when eating becomes a race to see who can finish first. One small consolation is that only the olives get eaten. Liquor is for people.

Although quite young, learning comes easily to him (her). One attempt to walk on the water in the pond was enough. One open louvre permits entry, and, soon discovered, the upstairs louvre leads to sleeping people who could be better employed providing warm toast and marmalade. As with all young, everything must be investigated. Writing is difficult when a sharp beak is trying to peck the full stops off the paper. "Catch the feather" makes a good game, though. You throw the feather up in the air and Splat watches it down almost to the table, then flies up and catches it, and what is more, brings it back for another go. Really it does not take long for an intelligent bird to train a couple of humans.

A tame bulbul is no respector of persons, and apart from taking the food off your fork, will stick his beak in your eye, your ear, up your nose and even silence talk by waiting, poised, for your mouth to open and then stick his beak in and pick your teeth. The amateur ornithologist must feel deflated when a bulbul perches on the binoculars and peeps over the top, in through the lens. You wear spectacles, he sits on them. You dont wear spectacles, your nose will do. But he will talk to you all the time.

He has several distinctive calls, which we have come to know and understand. A piping whistle when alone, means: "I am lonely, where are you?' A tweet-tweet is an unmistakable cry for food. After coming back indoors in a great hurry the other day from the garden, the angry scolding twitter meant nothing else but: "there is an *Accipiter tachiro* (juvenile) in the tulip tree, so what are you going to do about it?" It is almost a purr which says: "I am quite comfortable sitting under your chin. Do stop fidgeting."

At first we hoped that he would stay for a while before the call of the wild took him away. Now after two months we wonder if the wild has lost its voice. Splat goes out all day catching insects, but comes back at mealtimes. He is totally trusting, quite unafraid, but is not accepted by the other bulbuls. It is gratifying to have a relationship like this with a wild creature which is free to come and go, but we are begining to wonder if he will ever go.

The above remarks may help anyone who has three small girls knocking on the door one Sunday afternoon with a cardboard box . . . .

G. Preston, Box 21342, Nairobi.

Postcript: We went down to the coast for a few days and the day before we came back, Splat didn't. He had been coming in through the little door we had made for him every night, and had been visiting the neighbours to steal food and even a dressmaking pin, but the last night he did not appear. Cat? Hawk? Too much trust in *Homo sapiens*? We shall never know. It was not unexpected but was none the less a little sad.

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4th PAN - AFRICAN ORNITHOLOGICAL CONGRESS

Due to circumstances beyond our control the venue of the 4th Pan-African Ornithological Congress has been changed to Seychelles.

Dates, costs etc. will however remain unchanged, and Registration Forms enclosed with the April issue of the *Bulletin* are still applicable.

The Organizing Committee hopes that interested members will still take the opportunity of attending this important international event.

D.A. Turner & A.D. Forbes-Watson, on behalf of The Organizing Committee,
Box 48019, Nairobi, Kenya.

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BIRDS BATHING BY DIVING INTO WATER

The purpose of this note is to draw attention to 'impact-diving' as a method of bathing, an aspect of feather maintenance which is an activity whose study has been strangely neglected in spite of its obvious importance to a bird's well-being.

Birds that do not normally feed by diving into water are usually thought to be feeding aberrantly when observed doing so and I implied this interpretation for Little Bee-eaters *Merops pusillus* and Broad-billed Rollers *Eurystomus glaucurus* in a note on bee-eaters and rollers diving into water Reynolds (1965). Since then I have occasionally seen Little Bee-eaters catching food by diving but often definitely bathing by 'impact-diving'. White-fronted Bee-eaters *Merops bullockoides* bathe by this method and White-throated Bee-eaters *M. albicollis* that I saw diving into shallow flood water near Magadi in March 1974 were probably bathing rather than feeding. In a review of feather maintenance Simmons (1964) makes the general statement that highly aerial birds bathe from the air and specifically mentions swallows (Hirundinidae), drongos (Dicruridae), swifts (Apodidae), terns (Sterninae), hummingbirds (Trochilidae),kingfishers (Alcedinidae), and even pigeons (Columbidae) and owls (Strigidae).

On 23 August 1975 I watched a male and female Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone viridis* plunging into the Mara River from a tree overhanging the river. I first saw the male descending steeply, striking the surface of the water with his underparts and returning to a branch where he 'fluttered' his feathers before taking another plunge. While the birds were in view I saw each plunge some four or five times though other dives may have been made out of my sight. The birds' actions appeared to be practically identical with those described for Golden Orioles *Oriolus oriolus* by Collar (1975)

REFERENCES:

Collar, Nigel 1975 'Golden Orioles diving into water'. *Br. Birds* 68: 245-246.

Reynolds, J.F. 1965 'Bee-eaters and rollers diving into water'. *E. Afr. Wildl. J.* 3:129-130.

Simmons, K.E.L.S. 1964 Article 'Feather Maintenance' in Thomson, A.L.(ed.) *A New Dictionary of Birds.* London & New York:Nelson.

J.F. Reynolds, Box 40584, Nairobi.

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MONKEY ARBOREAL HIGHWAY AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

Over the past month I have spent many hours observing a pair of nesting Trogons *Apaloderma narina* in my forest at Karen and more or less daily I have seen our local troop of Syke's monkey *Cercopithecus mitis* which often passed over my hiding place between visits to certain fruiting fig trees *Ficus natalensis*. It occured to me after a few days of watching, that these animals appeared to have an arboreal 'road" through the tree tops and along certain branches.

From the fig tree to the east of the house they had to travel some hundred metres to the second fig on the west, both trees were in sight from my hiding place and their route crossed above me. They left the first fig via a croton *Croton megalocarpus* then via a creeper covered tree and so on to another croton then via various trees to a particular *Teclea viridis*, so to a croton branch higher up then to a non-fruiting fig at the base of which I was sitting.

I checked the route carefully and noted that daily each animal followed a very definite route from branch to branch. From one croton they dropped into the *Teclea* the top of which consisted of two vertical parallel slim stems, and from these a jump was necessary to reach another croton branch. One by one the younger animals approached, dropped from the croton into the *Teclea*, swung up the parallels and jumped. I could hardly believe that these slim stems could have supported the weight of the animals but I was more surprised when the large adults followed, using the same branches , into the *Teclea* and leaped upwards into the croton. Apparently these *Teclea* stems though slim, were resiliant enough to help swing the monkeys upward and assist the jump. All thirteen monkeys followed this arboreal highway without fail.

I was not detected for some days and then one animal must have got a whiff of my pipe. Three youngsters had reached the fig branch and the fourth had reached the croton where it sat, then detecting me, gave a warning call, a bird-like chirp. The animal froze behind a clump of mistletoe *Viscum fischeri*. The warning halted the rest of the troop spaced out along the route. Number four was now clearly puzzled and afraid to continue but it eventually made its way through other trees and gradually returned to the main band which had in the meantime returned down the route and gone over into a neighbouring property and out of sight. The first three however, were feeding in the west fig and they had to return to rejoin the troop, so trogon watching was given up temporarily to check on what they would do. They fed for nearly half an hour and to my delight they returned right down the route, branch by branch, exactly as usual. They did not detect me below.

I now wonder if, by any chance, each animal or the leader possibly leaves a scent trail on the branches from the hands and feet where each has grasped a branch, a sort of pheremone trail as laid by ants, particularly "safari" ants *Dorylus* spp. I was impressed by the fact that the monkeys travelled at intervals and all too often were out of sight of other members of the band, yet the same branch was used by each individual.

It is also noticeable that there are clear "bridges" across my driveway, one leading to the west fig and another near the entrance from the main road, these are always used though there are dozens of potential crossing points via the jacarandas. Haddow (1952) in his classic on the Red-tailed Monkey *Cercopithecus ascanius schmidti* reports that when collecting specimens it was simpler to wait at a monkey bridge rather than hunt through the forest. In Bwamba, Uganda, on four different visits to Mongiro forest we used to wait by such a bridge to watch the various monkeys, and using this were Red-tails, Black Mangaby *Cercocebus albigena*, Colobus *Colobus abyssinicus* and the Chimpanzee *Pan troglodytes*. So if there is a bridge then there should be a route leading to it. In the scanty literature at my disposal, I can find no reference to an arboreal highway through the forest.

Watching the Sykes feeding in the fig, I noted that each fruit was smelt after picking prior to being put in the mouth. The interval between smelling and placement in the mouth is almost imperceptible but there is a distinct pause. The sense of smell must be very acute if they can detect differences but I did note that some fruit were rejected and dropped. I saw one enterprising youngster feeding, it was clear that the fruit could not be reached by normal means so it took a firm grip on the branch with its feet, swung under, stretched out horizontally and grasped the twig with the fruit in its hands and put it in its mouth; then with a swing it righted itself and climbed above the branch. What was noticeable was the fact that the tail had been placed along the horizontal branch and wrapped round it, not in any prehensile action, but as a strong counter balance to lend support for the swing down and up again.

As a point of interest, I would like to mention the monkey troops in the Kakamega Forest which I visited recently. I was surprised to find many of these troops consisted of two or more species, even in one tree. These were Colobus, Red-tail and the Blue or local Syke's. Haddow (*op. cit.*) remarks that at Kaimosi "mixed bands of Red-tail and Blue monkeys are the rule rather than the exception."

REFERENCE:

Haddow, A.J. 1952 Field and Laboratory studies on an African monkey *Cercopithecus ascanius schmidti* Matschie. *Proc.Zool.Soc.Lond.* 122: 297-394.

G.R. Cunningham - van Someren, Box 24947, Nairobi.

CHECKLIST OF THE BIRDS OF MERU NATIONAL PARK

The Kenya National Parks are preparing a booklet on Meru Park which will include a checklist of birds. I would be most grateful if any readers with records or lists of birds seen in this park would send them to Graeme Backhurst, Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi. Thankyou.

Rosalie Osborn, Kenya National Parks, Box 14, Voi.

DAY TRIP TO AKIRA RANCH 22 JUNE 1975

This excursion, like other recent ones not involving an overnight stay, proved very popular and the 55 members who participated were met at about 9.30 a.m. near Longonot Satellite Station by Dr Christopher Field, a Cambridge graduate who has been working on wildlife research and management in Kenya since 1970. We then proceeded a further 8 km towards Narok before turning into one of the several tracks marked "Akira Ranch". Some of the cars were then left under guard 1 km off the tarmac road and the party proceeded on the not so bumpy but very dusty tracks further north.

Akira Ranch extends over 78 000 acres or 315 km sq. of Rift Valley grass and scrubland, stretching from Mt. Longonot's western slope to the boundary of Masailand and from the plains astride the Narok road into Hell's Gate. Like the 20 000 acres of Kedong Ranch, Akira is owned by a 20 all-citizen directors' Kedong Syndicate, and attempts to harmonise cattle-ranching (livestock averaging 3500 head) with what is called game harvesting on a sustained yield basis. There are still plans to convert it into a National Park with the intention of maintaining a 'hinterland' for wildlife migration to ensure the threatened survival of the Nairobi National Park, which can no longer rely very much on the Kitengela game corridor.

A handout sheet listed the impressive game populations recorded on the ranch resulting from a monthly census which has been a main feature of the research programme since 1970. It indicated 'mean numbers' and 'ranges' for the following species: Cokes Hartebeest or Kongoni 1600 (800-5000), Thomson's gazelle 1000 (500-3000), Grant's 600 (400-1000), Giraffe 300 (150-450), Eland 480 (150-1000), Steinbok and Mountain Reedbuck (150-200 each), Leopard(35-50), Cheetah (5-15), Hunting Dog (5-30), Lion ('transient' 2-5), Elephant ('herd of 30 passing through annually'). In addition, Zebra, much decimated by poaching recently, *c.* 200, Dik Dik *c.* 100, Bohor Reedbuck *c.* 75, Bushbuck *c.* 50, Waterbuck *c.* 30, Buffalo *c.* 200, Klipspringer *c.* 50, Baboon 3-4 troops, Vervet monkeys 1-2, plus jackals, Bat-eared fox (common) and Serval cat (widespread). Of all this wildlife panoply, we saw only kongoni, 'Tommy', Grants', eland and some buck in credible numbers, and also leopard spoor following a sandy river bed.

We were shown a derelict farmhouse half buried in sand and gravel (victim of a flood in April 1974 when 7-10 cm of rain fell within a couple of hours on the slopes of Longonot, months after a devastating bushfire had destroyed 16 000 ha of vegetation; a 'river' 200 m wide had swept down carrying volcanic sediment (the house had previously survived 28 years). This year, at the new ranchhouse, only 250 mm of rain has been recorded so far, out of an annual average of 550. To resist drought, the growth of leleshwa is encouraged as they provide fodder longer than anything else.

We were then taken to a trial shed covering cattle, sheep, goats, eland and hartebeest used for a comparative study of feeding habits and requirements of the respective species. Thus it has been found that an eland drinks twice as much as a kongoni but less than cattle, yet extracts double the protein and fat for its milk from a given quantity of fodder than a cow.

"Game meat ranching" is being tried and practised at present in three other localities in Kenya - on Olmorogi Ranch near Ilkek for eland, on Kikopi Ranch near Gilgil for impala, and on Galana Ranch east of Tsavo National Park for Oryx. (In a history of Ancient Egypt, I have read that mural paintings from the very early dynasties depict eland and other game animals kept beside cows in stables, presumably in an attempt at domesticating them for milk and meat; thus, there is nothing new under the Sun).

A further drive brought us to the southern entrance of Hell's Gate and we then walked 3 km into this modest but by no means negligible Kenyan replica of the Grand Canyon. In fact, it might be worthwhile some time to pitch a camp over a somewhat longer weekend in the area, walk the whole 12 km or so through to Naivasha Lake Road South, perhaps have lunch at Safariland Lodge, and return - taking the whole day; because of the robbers, alas, it would have to be a strong party, with some staying behind and lazing in the sunshine at the campsite. Perhaps a combined operation with the Mountain Club of Kenya?

As it was, we were content with the remote sight of 'Central Tower' and a close one of bubbling hot springs and boiling steam sizzling in underground cavities. Scratching some of the loamy reddish deposits with which the Masai would dye their hair and skin before shoe polish became available.

Our pleasant outing, which finished just in time before sunset, was rounded off by observations of ostrich, kori and black-bellied bustard, grey hornbills, and a variety of smaller birds.

Franz Rader, Box 30560, Nairobi.

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THE *Bulletin*

There will be an issue of the *Bulletin* for December this year; it will be distributed at the end of November.

Ed.

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Mrs Jane Stanton has written offering the following for sale in aid of the K.S.P.C.A. The magazines are at Bushwhackers Safari Camp, P.O. Kibwezi, and could be seen there or arrangements could be made to send them to Nairobi or Mombasa. In all there are 49 magazines. Would anyone care to make an offer for them?

1. Vols. 1, 2, 3 *Wild Life Magazine* (1959-61) complete and in good condition.
2. Nos. 1, 2, 3 & 4 *Africana* (1962) covers shabby, but the reading matter is in good condition.
3. Vol.1 *Africana* Nos. 8 & 10 only; Vol 2 *Africana* Nos. 4, 7, 8, & 10. Vol.3 *Africana* complete. Vol.4 *Africana* complete with exception of o.11. Vol.5 *Africana* Nos. 1 & 2.

Thirty seven issues of *Africana* and 12 of *Wildlife*, all in good condition except as indicated.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

AN EAST AFRICAN BIRD JOURNAL/BULLETIN

The following six communications have been received on this subject in response to Dr D.J. Pearson's letter in the last issue (*EANHS Bull.* 1975:95). All the letters are in favour of the idea. However, The Executive Committee of the Society does not feel able to embark on the production of the new ornithological publication at the moment, since only eight out of the total of more than 500 members have supported the idea. Admittedly, there have been no letters *against* the proposed periodical although I personally know that some people *are* against it.

If you have any views on the topic please write in, for or against.

Ed.

Sir,

I would like to express my support for David Pearson's suggestion in the last issue of the *Bulletin* (p.95) for a separate ornithological publication.

A short perusal of the bird literature will show that there is remarkably little known about the birds of East Africa, especially of areas outside forests. There must be a large amount of information stored away in notebooks or even simply in observers' minds which could and should be made known. One reason for this is general apathy ! But I think another, and this applies particularly to non-residents of East Africa, is that people prefer to put their observations into a purely ornithological journal (or Bulletin) rather than have them lost among notes on a wide range of other subjects. Space in foreign journals is becoming tighter (you even have to pay a page charge for some) and so outlets for publication are becoming fewer. Hopefully, apart from stimulating some people to write, such a publication would tend to concentrate observations in one place rather than in the present scattering.

I would suggest a format something on the following lines: the first part set aside for longer notes (probably none will be more than four or five pages) and a second part for 'Notes and Records' arranged by species and not by area or author. In addition I would like to see abstracts or at least a mention of recent papers and notes on East African birds in other journals though hopefully short notes would become reduced. The final outcome would then be, for want of a better word, a small encyclopaedia for the birds of East Africa.

Peter Lack, Box 14, Voi, Kenya.

Sir,

I think that Dr Pearson's suggestion - or is it plea? - for the E.A.N.H.S. to establish a periodical for publishing only observations on East African birds has much to commend it. As Graeme Backhurst points out, this proposal should keep all members of the Society happy. The absence of ornithological material in the *Bulletin* might even stimulate those who complain that there is too much about birds to send in notes on the topics which they do find interesting.

Apart from editorial difficulties in deciding the appropriate place for inter-disciplinary topics as birds being trapped in spiders' webs or birds as agents of flower pollination or seed dispersal, I foresee only one real difficulty: with a purely ornithological publication available it would be logical for *all* essentially local bird notes and papers, including those like the Ringing Report now appearing in the Society's *Journal*, to be published in itt. This would presumably mean that the new publication would have to be printed rather than duplicated so that authors could illustrate their papers more elaborately if necessary.

J.F. Reynolds, Box 40584, Nairobi.

Sir,

D.J. Pearson and G.C. Backhurst (*EANHS Bull.* 95-96) have covered the main points *for* the proposal. It will be interesting to see if there are any *against* sent to the Editor.

I feel that only good can come from it - the published matter should be purely East African, of course, when these issues would become the primary source for the latest news on the progress of East African ornithology, and an excellent vehicle for the publication of 'Notes' which would not normally be accepted by other periodicals. It can be argued that this is already done within the present format of the *Bulletin*, but a researcher can easily overlook important contributions if they are scattered among non-ornithological items. This is less likely if there is a 'bird issue', particularly if reviews of various aspects, such as new records or extensions of range were summarised annually.

In short, I would welcome such a split off of bird data, and wish our energetic Editor success if the decision is taken.

A.D. Forbes-Watson, Box 49771, Nairobi.

Sir,

For what an outside opinion is worth, I strongly favour the arguments put forward by David Pearson and yourself (*EANHS Bull.* 1975:95-96) for a bulletin or journal in East Africa devoted exclusively to birds; and as a member I would very much hope that such a publication would be under the auspices of the Society which I feel sure would benefit thereby as much as would Ornithology itself.

The absence of a bird journal in your region, with such a wealth of bird life, has always struck me as anomalous. For historical reasons it is invidious to compare the development of ornithology in East and West Africa; nevertheless, I will dare to observe that in some respects the science seems more advanced in the West, despite the fact that nearly all bird work there has been by *visitors* - in the colonial era mostly by administrators in office for maybe 10 or 15 years, nowadays businessmen, housewives and academics staying for only a few years, and also tourists. If knowledge about birds in the vast area that is West Afica does indeed compare favourably with that in East Africa, it will result in part from the West having by chance attracted the attention of a few major scholars in the earlier years, but I believe that not a little results from there being more recently an ornithological society there. The Nigerian Ornithologists' Society was formed with the express purpose of saving visitors' observations from the limbo, and I think that the I 000 pages of its *Bulletin* have been successful to that end.

There would be no question of such a venture being a culpable proliferation of bird journals. As far as I know, the continent is served by only four (*Bulletin of the Nigerian Orn. Soc.*, *Bokmakierie*, *Honeyguide* and *Ostrich*), although of course innumerable other journals regularly or sporadically carry papers in African ornithology, which is why bibliography in that field is a tediously complex matter. An East African publication - if the right formula can be found, would not only serve to reduce the scatter of journals in which papers on your birds currently appear, but it would surely promote the pursuit of knowledge more effectively than would any other of the Society's activities.

Much, however, will depend upon the style adopted. Splitting ornithology off from other natural history interests will not stem the flow of members' criticisms; the new journal will be too scientific for some, too popular for others. Its editorial board shall have to decide where the compromise is to lie between format and content designed to appeal on the one hand to academics and on the other to a wide lay readership - the problem being that a journal devoted to furthering knowledge will need to attract serious papers, whose authors not only demand presentable reprints but are also shy of committing their work to a periodical thought to be insufficiently academical. Various recipes have proved successful (consider, for instance, the South Africa and British periodicals), and I believe that this is such an important issue if a bird journal is decided upon in principle, at an early stage the styles of existing journals should be researched and a digest presented to Members for their comments and decision.

C.H. Fry, Aberdeen University, Department of Zoology,
Tillydrone Avenue, Aberdeen AB9 2TN, Scotland.

Sir,

I was interested to read Dr Pearson's letter in the last issue of the *Bulletin*. His proposals for revising the form of the *Bulletin* may seem rather revolutionary to the more conservative members of the Society and I would therefore like to add my support.

I have tried to put myself in the position of a member who is not interested in ornithology or even 'bird-watching', and after considerable reflection, have not come up with any adverse reasons for not implementing the suggestions outlined by Dr Pearson.

As a member with a strong ornithological bias I can see the advantages envisaged by Dr Pearson. In addition, the new system would benefit the few researchers in all fields who are begining to use the *Bulletin* as a reference giving it more importance (and consequently the E.A.N.H.S. also) outside East Africa.

My own particular interest in the new system is the boost which I hope the Nest Record Scheme would receive. If, in the future, a quarterly bulletin devoted to ornithology materialises I would like to publish a summary of all breeding records submitted during the previous quarter. I believe that in this way (i.e. more publicity) the scheme would receive more enthusiasm and support. In other countries which have an Ornithological Society with publications devoted to birds, this is often standard practice, and certainly there is more support for nest record schemes in such countries.

In the last few decades the number of 'bird-watchers' (as opposed to ornithologists) has multiplied many times forming a new class of naturalist. And it is this new class who will benefit most from Dr Pearson's suggestions, and who are at present not really catered for by the present *Bulletin*. Bird-watchers hesitate to send in distributional lists, migration observations and interesting notes such as occur in exclusively ornithological publications, feeling that they are out of place in a 'Natural History' bulletin.

As a member of our Society I feel that the law of supply and demand must have some bearing on the future of the Society. If there is in fact a demand for such exclusively ornithological issues of the *Bulletin* (which is certainly indicated by the contents of recent issues of the *Bulletin*) then the E.A.N.H.S. should supply that demand. If the apparent gap is not filled, and the demand increases, it is possible that there may be a move in the future to create an Ornithological Society. This could be disastrous to the E.A.N.H.S. which has been unfailing in its efforts to serve the members, in particular the ornithologists who have received every encouragement for all their activities.

Hazel Britton, Nest Record Scheme Organiser,
Shimo-la-tewa School, Box 90163, Mombasa, Kenya.

The following was received as a P.S. to a letter on another subject:

I like the idea of an "Ornithological Bulletin" say quarterly very much indeed, or even every alternate issue. I hope it comes off.

You could include feature articles like "Where to find birds in East Africa" Yes, I am all for the idea.

D.A. Turner, Box 48019, Nairobi.

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WILD FLOWERS OF MALAWI by A. Moriarty, Capetown: Purnell & Sons (1957), Pp. 166 with 80 coloured plates. Price in S.A. R.12.50 (say 160/- E.A. Sh.)

The text which consists of a few lines of rather chatty notes about each species illustrated and is unfortunately placed on the reverse of the plate concerned instead of facing it, is thin and often redundant. What is the use of telling us that *Lobelia* and *Lightfootia* species have blue flowers, which is obvious from the plate, while nothing is said about the characters, distribution and properties of the genera and families concerned?

The plates illustrate 363 species of flowering plant found in Malawi belonging to 224 genera. Plants with inconspicuous flowers such as grasses and sedges are omitted and so are nearly all trees and shrubs. Whilst not unattractive and giving quite a good impression of the species illustrated the plates are rather pallid and wishy-washy. (But perhaps we East Africans have been rather spoiled by Mrs Adamson's splendid plates.) They are clearly the work of an artist without much botanical knowledge and are not always very accurate. (See for example the leaves of *Trifolium simense* in plate 66 and the pod of *Aeschynomene schimperi* and the leaf of *A. abyssinica* in plate 67.)

Species are grouped in thoir genera and families but the latter are arranged haphazardly except for the fact that the *Monocotyledons* (with the exception of *Dioscorea*) are placed together at the beginning.

The names used seem to be accurate and up to date but there are too many spelling mistakes *Barlaria* for *Barleria*, *Pentus* for *Pentas*, *Aeollanthus* for *Aeolanthus* which just should not happen.

In spite of these strictures the book should definitely be valuable to everyone living in Malawi who is interested in plants if he or she can face the price. In view of the fact that all but five of the genera illustrated also occur in East Africa it should also be useful to those numerous naturalists in this part of the world who find illustrations not much use unless they are in colour.

J.B. Gillett, Box 45166, Nairobi.

SOME WELL KNOWN AFRICAN MOTHS by Elliot Pinhey. Rhodesia:Bundu Series-Longmans. 1975. Soft, colour illustration cover. Pp.116 with glossary, index & references.

That profilic writer E.C.G. Pinhey, one time entomologist at the National Museum, Nairobi and now of the National Museum at Bulawayo, has done it again with the publication of this new handbook. "The bundu Series of books has been derived from the earlier series published with the aid and help of the Standing Conference of the National Voluntary Youth Organisations in Rhodesia."

Two hundred and forty moths are depicted and described in colour or black and white, with notes on the larvae, food plants and distribution. There are thirty colour plates, five black and white photographs and some line drawings of the anatomy of the insect (larvae and imago). The colour plates, reproductions from colour photographs, are reasonable but not outstanding and the vast majority of species are readily recognisable.

This will be a useful little book for the beginner finding his way about with moths, their families and so on. There are notes on capture methods, preparation and final storage.

As in his butterfly books *Butterflies of Southern Africa* Capetown:Nelson 1965 and "Look around you" series, Rhodesian Scientific Association, Salisbury 1949, he has invented 'English' names for these moths but he says - "younger enthusiasts and beginners usually prefer to use common names rather than scientific appelations". A pity, so today in Rhodesia the beginner will be on the look-out for a 'Red-tailed Gypsy' 'White Father', 'Bar Maiden' and a 'Discal Vapourer'; others will be sugaring for an 'Astute' or 'Specious Tiger' maybe a 'Creamcake' or 'Sleepy Tiger' or even 'Esmaralda's Kitten' while the real find of the evening will be a 'Blushing Monkey'.

Looking at the 'Cream Cake' or 'Sleepy Tiger' I can see no resemblance to either and how a large Saturnid moth can be likened to a 'Blushing Monkey' is beyond even imagination. Nevertheless, many of our Kenya moths are illustrated and if we ignore these common names and apply the scientific names, then our youngsters will have a good start.

G.R. Cunningham - van Someren, Box 24947, Karen, Nairobi.

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REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

I am assembling material on the ways people have managed a degree of co-existence with venomous animals. I am as interested in folk and indigenous talismans, cures and lore as I am in early European first aid equipment and later antivenene kits and systems. Such a collection would inevitably include snake-stones, herbal remedies and devices for warding off venomous animals. The purpose of the collection at this stage is not to evaluate the material but to assemble it for study and classification. It is a world-wide collection.

Perhaps some readers will have material and/or information and be willing to contact me. Insofar as is possible I am purchasing material for the collection which will later be collated for a book and quite probably used in an educational exhibit. Eventually it will be donated intact to an appropriate educational facility.

I shall be most grateful for any assistance you or your readers can provide.

Roger A. Caras,
84-01 Main Street - Kew Gardens, New York 11435, U.S.A.

Distribution of the forest Suni antelope *Nesotragus moschatus*

There are few data available on the present distribution of this small antelope particularly from forest areas north of Lake Naivasha, along the Mau to Kericho-Sotik-Chapalunga, on the east from Rongai, Elgeyo-Marakwet-Tinderet north to Nandi to Elgon or from the isolated forests on Ndare, Mukogodo, Leroghi, Mathews, Ndoto, Nyiro and Kulal.

The writer has completed a short paper on the biology of the suni but would like to add a note on the present distribution for the record, as so much indigenous forest is being rapidly destroyed. Any data for localities during the past ten years would be much appreciated and acknowledged.

G.R. Cunningham - van Someren, Box 24947, Karen, Kenya.

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NOTICE: KENYA ORCHID SOCIETY

The Kenya Orchid Society will be holding its annual show in All Saints' Cathedral Hall, Nairobi from Thursday 23 October until Saturday 25 October 1975, inclusive.

Members of the public will be most welcome: (Adults Sh.5/- Children Sh.2/-) from 12.30 p.m. - 6.00 p.m. on the Thursday; from 10.00 a.m. - 6.00 p.m. on the Friday and from 9.30 a.m. - 5.30 p.m. on the Saturday.

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SOCIETY FUNCTIONS

Sunday 12 October 1975: Day trip to Ololua Forest, Langata for birds, flowers and insects. Please meet at the National Museum at 9 a.m. and bring a picnic lunch.

Monday 13 October 1975 at 5.15 p.m.: at the Museum Hall, Nairobi. Mr G. Rathbun will give an illustrated lecture on "Elephant Shrews".

18/19/20 October 1975: Weekend field trip to Mayers' farm Nandi Hills. Members should be self-contained with all camping equipment and food. Water and firewood will be available, also a guard, for whom a collection will be made. Altitude about 2000 m. Purpose: examining western Kenya birds and vegetation. Members wishing to take part, please fill in the enclosed slip and return it to Mrs A.L. Campbell, Box 14469, Nairobi. *Not Later* than 8 October. Further details will be sent to those taking part.

Sunday 9 November 1975: Dr J. Kokwaro, University of Nairobi, Botany Department will hold a field demonstration on pressing and identification of plants. Please meet at the Museum at 9 a.m.

Monday 10 November 1975 at 5.15 p.m.: at the Museum Hall, Nairobi. Dr R. Newson of ICIPE will give a talk on "Factors Influencing Ticks behaviour"

Monday 8 Decmeber 1975 at 5.15 p.m.:at the Museum Hall, Nairobi. Lecture by Dr Celia Kamau.

12 December 1975: - Possible visit to Saiwa Swamp near Kitale, details next issue.

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FOR SALE

The Society is very sorry that Dr Franz Rader will be leaving Kenya in the middle of September to return to Austria. Earlier this year Dr Rader gave the Society a donation, and he is now offering the following camping items for sale, the proceeds of which will go to the Society:

One Two man tent "Dadora Double' with fitted groundsheet, one window on front and one on back doors. Pegs, poles, mallet etc. Sh.1,200.00

Two wood & canvas camp chairs (Low & Bonar)	each	Sh.	50.00
Two wood & canvas camp stools (" ")	each	Sh.	25.00
Two sectioned Kapok roll-up camp matresses	each	Sh.	50.00
One wooden camp table with folding legs		Sh.	100.00
One traum type camp bed		Sh.	150.00
One folding camp bed		Sh.	100.00
One mosquito net		Sh.	20.00
One 4 gallon plastic gerry can		Sh.	50.00

ALL IN MINT CONDITION

The Society is very grateful to Dr Rader for offering these very useful camp items for sale. Please contact the Librarian, Miss Allen, at Nairobi 20611 extension 15 to arrange viewing times.

For Sale, proceeds to the Society:

Mr G. Low has presented the following framed and glazed prints (non-reflecting glass) for sale, all proceeds to the Society. The first six are by Rena Fennesy, the seventh is by an unknown artist:

Large print - Violet-backed Starling	Sh.	100.00
Small print - Beautiful Sunbird	Sh.	25.00
Small print - Bar-tailed Trogon	Sh.	25.00
Small print - White-fronted Bee-eater	Sh.	25.00
Small print - Lilac-breasted Roller	Sh.	25.00
Small print - Superb Starling	Sh.	25.00
Small print - Spoonbills	Sh.	20.00

NEW MEMBERS

Life Member:

Mr Rishad Naoroji, Belha Court, Ramchandani Marg., Apollo Bunder,
Bombay, India.

Full Members:

Mr S.L. Aleljung, Box 400, Mbeya, Tanzania.
Mr J. Allaway, Box 14102, Nairobi.
Mr I.M. Atkinson, Box 40563, Nairobi.
Mr P.J. Bauer, Pasture Research Project, Box 450, Kitale, Kenya.
Mr J.T. Boreham, Box 48206, Nairobi.
Mr J. Ellis, Box 47349, Nairobi.
Mr R.B. Engwall, Box 30600, Nairobi.
Mr R. Hammelbacher, Box 43421, Nairobi.
Mr R.N. Hobbs, 20 Broadfields, Goffs Oak, Waltham Cross, Herts., England.
Miss M. Jackes, c/o Mr D.D. Leakey, Box 30239, Nairobi.
Mr M.D. Lee, Box 24701, Nairobi.
Mr L.P. Lounibos, ICIPE Coastal Research Station, Box 80804, Mombasa, Kenya.
Mr S.M. Muchiru, Wildlife Clubs of Kenya, Box 40658, Nairobi.
Mr R. Poole, African Wildlife Leadership Foundation, Box 48177, Nairobi.
Mr Anker Poulsen, Box 1807, Mwanza, Tanzania.
Miss A.C. Rijpstra, Box 20752, Nairobi.
Mrs P. Scott, Michimukuru Estate, Private Bag, Meru, Kenya.
Mr R.T. Stanek, Box 30658, Nairobi.
Mr J.A. Stevens, Box 128, Kiambu, Kenya.
Rev. J.E. Thompson, St. John's Seminary, Rakwaro, Box 504, Kisii, Kenya.
Mr A.M. Voorhoeve, Box 20752, Nairobi.
The Rev. D.G. Weeks, The Methodist Church, Box 98224, Mombasa, Kenya.
Mr N. de N. Winser, 107 Upper Woodcote Rd., Caversham, Reading, England.
Mr I. Zimmermann, Box 43292, Nairobi.
Dr R.R. Zimmerman, Box 30588, Nairobi.
Mrs A. Zola, Box 45258, Nairobi.

Junior Members:

Miss Susan Bush, Box 14022, Nairobi.
Miss Mary Alice Hunzicker, Box 43421, Nairobi.
Samuel Hinga Mwangi, Kenyatta College, Nyandurua I - RMIC, Box 30553,
Nairobi.
Maria Quieti, c/o Brunners Hotel, Box 40949, Nairobi.

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SOME RECENT PERIODIC LITERATURE AVAILABLE IN THE LIBRARY

Berger, L.A. 1975 *Celaenorrhinus* nouveaux de l'Afrique noire. (Lepidoptera: Hesperiidae). *Lambillionea* 75:13-15.

Bolton, B. 1975 A revision of the African Ponerine Ant genus *Psalidomyrmex* Andre (Hymenoptera:Formicidae). *Bull.Brit.Mus. (Nat.Hist.) Ent.* 32:1-16.

Crosnier, A. & Thomassin, B. 1974 Sur les crabes de la famille de Portunidae (Crustacea:Decapoda) nouveaux pour Madagascar ou rares. *Bull.Mus.Natl. Hist. Paris Zool.* 165:1097-1118.

Dollfus, P.P. 1974 De l'*Astropecten bonnieri* R. Koehler, 1905 (Ecinodermes: Stellérides). *Bull.Mus.Natl.Hist.Nat. Paris Zool.* 176:1450-1452.

Eltringham, S.K. 1973 Fluctuations in the numbers of wildfowl on an equatorial hippo wallow. *Wildfowl* 24:81-87.

Erwin, T.L. 1974 The genus *Coptocarpus* Chaudoir of the Australian region with notes on related African species. (Coleoptera:Caradidae:Oodini). *Smithsonian Contrib.Zool.* 184.

Groves, C.F., Andrews, P.& Horne, J.F.M. 1974 Tana River Colobus and Mangabey. *Oryx* 12:565-575.

Lubboek, R. 1975 Fishes of the family Pseudochromidae (Perciformes) in the northwest Indian Ocean and Red Sea. *J.Zool.Lond.* 175:115-157.

Maclean, G.L. 1975 Belly-soaking in the Chardriiformes. *J. Bombay Nat. Hist.Soc.* 72:74-82.

Minig, A. 1975 Revision de la position taxonomique de *Charaxes etheoclea* forme Catachrous Staudinger. *Lambillionea* 75:18-32.

Monod, T. 1974 Nouvelles observations sur le genre *Bagatus* (Crustacea: Isopoda) *Bull.Mus.Natl.Hist.Nat. Paris Zool.* 166:1121;1135.

Poche, R.M. 1974 Ecology of the African Elephant *Loxodonta a. africana* in Niger, West Africa. *Mammalia* 38:567-580.

Van Soest, R.W.M. 1975 Zoogeography and speciation in the Salpidae (Tunicata: Thaliacea) *Beaufortia* 23:181-215.

Vivien, Mireille I. 1974 Étude d'un Labridae tropical, *Cheilinus bimaculatus* Valenciennes, 1840 description des stades juvéniles, évolution morphologique, écologie. *Bull.Mus.Natl.Hist.Nat. Paris Zool.* 169:1225-1240.

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LIBRARY NOTICE

The Classey reprint of our Special supplement No.6 "The Swallowtail Butterflies of East Africa" by R.H. Carcasson, has now arrived and is available from the Librarian, price Sh.25/- (plus 1/50 extra please, if you want your copy sent by post). Members and readers outside East Africa should order direct from E.W. Classey, Park Road, Faringdon, Berks, SN 77 DR, England.

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THE EAST AFRICA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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MEMBERSHIP

This offers you free entry to the National Museum, Nairobi; free lectures, films, slide shows or discussions every month in Nairobi; field trips and camps led by experienced guides; free use of the joint Society-National Museum Library (postal borrowing is also possible); reciprocal arrangements with the Uganda Society's Library in the Uganda Museum, Kampala; family participation: wives and children of members may attend most Society functions; one copy of the *EANHS Bulletin* every month; a copy of each *Journal* published during your period of membership; the Society controls the ringing of birds in East Africa and welcomes new ringers; the Society runs an active Nest Record Scheme; activities such as plant mapping and game counting are undertaken on a group basis. Membership rates are given at the foot of this page.

JOURNAL

The Society publishes *The Journal of the East Africa Natural History Society and National Museum.* Each issue consists usually of one paper, however, sometimes two or more short papers may be combined to form one number. The aim of this method of presentation is to ensure prompt publication of scientific information; a title page is issued at the end of each year so that the year's papers may be bound together. Contributions, which should be typed in double spacing on one side of the paper, with wide margins, should be sent to the Secretary, Box 44486, Nairobi, Kenya. Authors receive twenty-five reprints of their article free, provided that these are ordered at the time the proofs are returned.

E.A.N.H.S. BULLETIN

This is a duplicated monthly magazine which exists for the rapid publication of short notes, articles, letters and reviews. Contributions, which may be written in clear handwriting or typed, should be sent to the Editor (*EANHS Bulletin*), P.O. Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi, Kenya. Line drawings will be considered if they add to the value of the article, photographs cannot be published.

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Subscriptions are due 1st January. From 1st July you may join at half the yearly rate and receive publications from that date. Application forms for membership are obtainable from the Secretary, Box 44486. Nairobi.

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BULLETIN

LIBRARIES

A monthly publication of the East Africa Natural History Society, Box 44486, Nairobi, Kenya. Price 2 shillings

NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Members of the Society (and non-members) are asked to follow these simple instructions when writing articles or letters for submission to the *Bulletin*. The *Bulletin* is presented each month in a duplicated format: the paper size is 20.5×23 cm (10×8 inches), line drawings can be reproduced but the area should not be more than 17.5×23 cm. Lettering on figures should preferably be in 'Letraset', neatly done in Indian ink or left blank: if the last method is followed, the lettering should be indicated on an overlaying sheet and should *not* be done on the figure. Figures should be prepared on good quality white writing paper and not on Bristol Board or other thick material. Whenever plants or animals are mentioned the scientific name should also be given but not in parenthesis. Trinomials should not be used unless there is good reason to do so. Author's names of species are not required.

Contributions may be typed (preferably) or written clearly and should be sent to: G. C. Backhurst, Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi, Kenya. Receipt of contributions will be acknowledged.

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CHESTNUT - BANDED SAND PLOVER RESPONDING TO A SUPERNORMAL STIMULUS

Prof. Niko Tinbergen's experimental work on brooding behaviour in Oystercatchers *Haematopus ostralegus*, Herring Gulls *Larus argentatus* and Grey Lag Goose *Anser anser* showed that these species attempt to brood a giant model egg in preference to their own egg(s). Where models evoke a stronger response than the natural situation/object they are said to provide 'supernormal' stimuli - for brooding in the above experiments.

Most of the rather few records of birds responding to supernormal stimuli in the wild are of small passerines feeding fledgling Cuckoos *Cuculus canorus* and even, on rare occasions, gaping fish. The instance described below is exactly comparable to Tinbergen's brooding experiments except that the Chestnut-banded Sand Plover *Charadrius pallidus* concerned did not have a nest near the egg providing the supernormal stimulus.

In late June 1973 a heavy storm had caused a sudden rise in the water level of one of the lagoons at Lake Magadi around which Avocets *Recurvirostra avosetta* were nesting. One nest had been swept away and its eggs scattered along the 'tide-line'. On 1 July I was watching the remaining four pairs of Avocets for about 8 hours. During this time many Chestnut-banded Sand Plovers fed along the water's edge, paying no attention to the abandoned Avocet eggs lying on the mud. One plover, however, suddenly 'noticed' one of the eggs, ran up to it, and, for a few seconds, attempted to 'brood' it. The plover then lost 'interest' and resumed feeding.

REFERENCE:

Tinbergen, N. 1951 *The Study of Instinct.* London:Oxford University Press.

J.F. Reynolds, Box 40584, Nairobi.

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BLACK - THROATED HONEY GUIDE AND ABYSSINIAN SCIMITER BILL

On 7 August 1975, we were working along one of the rocky ridges behind the north end of the Ngong Hills when our attention was drawn to the chattering call of a large honey-guide, the Black-throated *Indicator indicator* which we spotted and approached for a closer view. The bird's chattering increased in tempo as we neared the cliff face so we decided to test the bird's intentions, for it clearly had gained our attention. We followed, after it had flown off some metres away, where it again chattered, then on our approach it flew off again still chattering. We followed. It chattered almost excitedly at one point so we made a close investigation of the many holes and crevices in the rock, some of which could well have held a bees' nest and comb, but with no success. However, the day was dull and bees could have been inactive.

The bird continued to chatter even when vegetation within a couple of metres was moved around. The noise it made attracted two Yellow-rumped Seed-eaters *Serinus atrogularis* to alight alongside. As we could be of no further use to the bird we moved on. (Incidentally, a point not mentioned by Mackworth-Praed & Grant is that the bill is pink although Friedmann 1955, *The Honey Guides U.S. Nat. Mus. Bull.* 208 does mention this.)

Further along the rocky ridge we found a pair of Abyssinian Scimiter-bills *Phoeniculus minor* which were extremely noisy and appeared to be busy trying to drive off a Black-throated Honey-guide from a tree, that appeared to contain many holes and crevices, in which the scimiter-bill might have had a nest. So we set to watch in case we could observe the honey-guide entering any of the holes.

It was curious that the scimiter-bills appeared not to attack the honey-guide but to just chase after it from tree to tree, and even to alight alongside it, all the while calling. What we were about to see was not the act of parasitism but the product of such and it dawned on us that maybe the scimiter-bills were feeding a young honey-guide.

One scimiter-bill had disappeared but the second was searching the canopy of of an acacia treee. At 11.45 h it flew up, obviously carrying a caterpillar, to the tree and perched near the honey-guide. It appeared to feed for next we saw it wiping its bill on the branch. It called and flew off some 300 m away to search another acacia. The honey-guide, meanwhile, undertook a number of short flights between the trees. G.M. watched it, while C.v-S. kept an eye on the scimiter-bill. At 12.20 h the scimiter-bill returned, again carrying a caterpillar, and it went directly to where the honey-guide was sitting and fed it. The honey-guide uttering a call, 'wheg-wheg-wheg', the foster also called and then left. At 12.30 the scimiter-bill returned and again fed the honey-guide.

It was now clear that our initial impression that the honey-guide was seeking to parasitise the scimiter-bills was wrong; but, in fact, we now had proof that the honey guide does parasitise scimiter-bills and the foster-parents were feeding the young parasite honey-guide.

Mackworth-Praed & Grant, 1952, do not mention the Phoeniculidae amonst host species, but Friedmann *op. cit.* quotes - - '3 honeyguides' eggs from the nest of *Rhinopomastes cyanomelas* (= *Phoeniculus cyanomelas* Scimiter-bill) reported by Plowes in the Transvaal". (*cyanomelas* eggs are blue, those of honey-guides, white.) There is a doubtful record mentioned by A. Roberts (quoted by Friedmann) of honey-guide eggs from *Phoeniculus purpureus* the Green Wood Hoopoe. Neuby-Varty, also quoted by Friedmann, found "five eggs, all pecked and one honey-guide".

Our record now proves beyond doubt that the Black-throated Honey-guide uses Abyssinian Scimiter-bills as hosts.

(E.A.N.R.S. No. CvS/75/108)

S. Grahame Madge, Firway End, George Hill, Crediton, Devon, England.
G.R. Cunningham - van Someren, Box 24947, Karen.

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THE FOOD CHAIN AND WOODFORD'S OWL

Some time ago, I found over a period of several days, a number of small pellets and casts together with droppings, under a large eucalyptus tree, by my dam at Karen. Examination showed that these contained insect remains, ant and termite head capsules, frog and toad bones. However, in addition, one also had bright yellow and metallic green feathers from a sunbird, probably either the Collared *Anthreptes collaris* or the Variable *Nectarinia venusta*. The puzzle was what bird produced these pellets which showed such an odd diet, owl, hawk, coucal or heron?

The food chain started with the frogs or toads which had been feeding on ants and termites, but what in turn had eaten the frogs?

The answer was recently provided by a pair of Wood or Woodford's Owl *Ciccaba woodfordi* which live in my forest at Karen. They roost regularly in certain trees, high up amonst dense foliage and are not readily seen, however, the mass of white droppings below gives away the roost in use. Searches among these droppings had been negative for a long period, but by chance I found a single pellet of the same size as those from under the gum tree. This pellet contained insect remains and frog bones. So Woodford's Owl takes frogs or toads and in addition birds, which it could snatch from the roost site. I am now pretty certain that the original pellets were cast by this owl.

I can find no reference in the literature to these items. Brown 1970, *African Birds of Prey*, gives "rats, squirrels, shrews", p.297 and on p.311 "insects, small mammals". Mackworth-Praed & Grant mention "nocturnal insects with a few mammals, etc.".

The pellets usually contained the remains of one to three small frogs. In one I extracted the almost complete skeleton of a larger frog. Fairly large beetles are eaten to judge by the size of the elytra remains.

G.R. Cunningham - van Someren, Box 24947, Karen.

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REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

Anyone having nesting dates with precise localities for the Cardinal Woodpecker from central and south-central Kenya is requested to send the data to me at the address below. I am particularly interested in data from the Aberdare-Mau escarpment highlands, and from adjacent lower areas to the south of the Mau, in the upper Athi region, about Mt. Kenya and from Lake Baringo south to Nakuru. The data will be greatly appreciated, and useful in systematic studies of the highland and plains form of this species.

Lester L. Short, American Museum of Natural History,
Central Park West at 79th Street, New York, New York 10024, U.S.A.

After mid-January 1976, please send to me c/o Mrs J. Horne, Box 24622, Karen.

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CAPTAIN C. R. S. PITMAN C. B. E., D. S. O., M. C.

The recent death of one of the most distinguished Life Members of the Society deserves more than a passing mention in its Bulletin. Perhaps, as an E.A.N.H.S. member of many fewer years' standing, but nevertheless overlapping in neighbouring Tanzania 15 out of his 30 years in Uganda, and having, since his retirement in 1951, been lucky enough to see a good deal of him, it is fitting that I should try to say something of Charles Pitman's contribution to ornithology and all he meant to his innumerable friends.

I am not at all sure whether it was at an earlier age or at some stage after, as a lad of 19, he launched into his career by joining the Indian Army in 1909, that he began to take an active interest in birds, but by 1914 he had become a member of the B.O.U. After a very distinguished war career, which took him for the first time to Africa as well as the Middle East and France, his ornithological interests and extraordinary knowledge rapidly became known when he took up the appointment in the Game Department of Uganda, which, except for a two year secondment to what is now Zambia from 1931-1933 (when he effectively laid the foundations of one of the best national park - not to mention elephant control - systems in Africa today), he continued to serve and, soon, to head till his retirement.

Charles Pitman's consuming passion and the subject of most of his ornithological papers (as opposed to his books, which were largely concerned with 'big game' and 'snakes' - he was a supreme example of that dying breed, the all round naturalist) was the discovery, description and study of the nests and eggs of birds, but, just as in Zambia he was a pioneer of habitat conservation, so in his chosen ornithological speciality, he laid the foundation of a scientific and conservationist approach and became very critical of unselective or meaningless accumulation of specimens. His other prominent and all too rare virtue was that he was always ready to share any information he had available and, as the fruits of his vast experience were methodically stored, he set a wonderful example in the speed, efficiency and quiet self-effacing helpfulness with which he responded to all requests. Although his own ornithological publications were few, something of Charles Pitman is to be found in innumerable papers by others, not to mention such publications as the *New Dictionary of Birds*, his contributions to which were a model. They are in fact a model, which like his life would be hard to emulate but nevertheless could well be used as an example by all who follow him.

Hugh F.I. Elliott.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

THE CONTENTS AND STANDARD OF SOME RECENT ISSUES OF THE *JOURNAL*

I consider that some comment is called for on the apparent lack of refereeing and editing of some recent issues of the *Journal*. One of the criteria for publication in the *Journal* is that common English names should follow the scientific, when these are available. Why then was the paper by Andrews, Groves & Horne on the Ecology of the lower Tana River Flood Plains (No.151) permitted to be published without the common names of the birds listed in the four page check-list?

A far more critical situation arises with the paper by Gwahaba on the ecology of the Pied Crow (No.153). This paper appears not to have been refereed at all. Apart from many minor errors i.e. "Material and Methods" instead of "Materials and Methods" there are many points at issue of which I will mention just a few. Under "Examination and dissection" the author mentions making both thick and thin blood smears from the birds. As birds have nucleated erythrocytes thick smears are totally useless for detecting blood parasites. Whilst it might just be possible to detect the presence of microfilariae in an unstained thin smear, the presence of other parasites would not be seen unless the smears were first stained. This is not mentioned. Also, those birds which were stored in the deep-freeze prior to dissection would not provide satisfactory material for making blood smears as the blood would haemolyse on thawing. These points should have been raised by the referee.

Fig.2 could have been reduced in size by a quarter without losing any of the data. How many birds were examined to produce the data in Fig.3? Bearing in mind the title of the paper, the most serious criticism concerns the section on "Parasites". Considering that these were of minor importance and that none was identified to species, how can it be justified to waste two whole pages on totally irrelevant drawings (Fig.4)? Had these been accurate drawings of identified species there might have been some excuse, but as they stand the drawings are so poor they would not be considered for publication in an elementary textbook on parasitology, let alone in a scientific paper.

If one looks at the basic data contained in Gwahaba's paper there is enough content to produce a short paper. However, in its present form as published this could easily have been reduced in length by half. The fault for this lies not with the author but with the referee. We are constantly being reminded of the cost of producing the *Journal*, and it is the members of this Society who are paying for the publication of these papers. Therefore the members are entitled to expect that careful consideration be given to manuscripts presentd for publication in the *Journal* and that proper editing and refereeing are applied.

Publishing papers in the *Journal* by lowering the standards as has occurred recently, accrues little credit either to the author or to the international reputation of the Society and its *Journal*.

M.A. Peirce, 6 Barrie House, Hartland Road,
Addlestone, Weybridge, Surrey, KT15 1JT, England.

Sir,

Slim Easton recorded an apparently new colony of Marabou Storks *Leptoptilos crumeniferus* in northern Tanzania (*EANHS Bull.* 1975:110-111). In addition to those he lists, there was also a colony near Ikoma in 1972 (D.C. Houston, C.J. Pennycuick, *in litt.*) with about 40 nests.

For several years I have been collecting records of breeding colonies of Marabous in East Africa. Those known for Uganda were summarised in the *E. Afr. Wildl. J.* 11:227-240 (1973).

Only six colonies seem to be known for Kenya, Namely -

Kitale, approx.	1.00'N.,	35.00'E.
Garissa	0.50'S.,	39.50'E.
Lorian Swamp	1.00'N.,	39.00'E.
Habaswein	1.00'N.,	39.30'E.
Makindu	2.20'S.,	36.05'E.
L.Turkana (Rudolf)	3.00'N.,	36.05'E.

There is also a record in Jackson of a colony on the Molo River, but the locality is not given and I have been unable to trace it.

I intend to write a short review of what is known of the breeding colonies Marabous in East Africa and would be most grateful for information from anybody who has records - or a good memory. It seems more than likely that other colonies exist in Kenya especially in the west.

D.E. Pomeroy, Box 43844, Nairobi.

The following letters all deal with the proposed ornithological bulletin -

Sir,

I would like to add my name to those who have written in support of David Pearson's suggestion of a separate ornithological publication for East Africa. I feel that it must come under the auspices of the E.A.N.H.S., and if finance is a problem, a separate charge to members receiving this new publication should be levied. If possible this new publication should be printed in a similar fashion as the present Ringing Report.

The greatest benefit I think, would be that idle people like myself would be stimulated to submit interesting records, either sight or as a result of mist-netting, as well as records of breeding. I have often felt that a systematic list of distributional and breeding records would not fit into the present format of the *Bulletin*.

I would urge all bird-watchers, ornithologists, ringers as well as tickers and twitchers to support the proposal, and to write in to express their approval.

W.P.H. Duffus, Vet. Res. Lab., P.O. Kabete, Kenya.

Sir,

Having thought further on this matter since my previous communication (*antea* 1975:120), I feel that canvassing opinion is entirely unnecessary. As Editor of the *Bulletin* you, Sir, should be able to decide on the content of any particular issue without reference to anyone else. If you see fit to publish an issue which is devoted to birds (and which could be issued simultaneously with a more general issue) I think you should do so. The Society has elected you to this position, and I am sure that my fellow members will approve of any action regarding the *Bulletin* you take.

A.D. Forbes-Watson, Box 49771, Nairobi.

Sir,

I would like to add my support to Dr D.J. Pearson's letter on this subject *EANHS Bull.* 1975:95 , which I had refrained from giving earlier as my wife Hazel had written a letter on the same subject.

The letters in the last issue (*EANHS Bull.* 1975:119-122) seem to cover the various advantages of the proposed change admirably. A positive response from only one or two per cent of the members of the Society is perhaps rather discouraging, but apathy of this sort is to be expected (regrettably) in all such ventures, just as most members have been apathetic about the *Bulletin* itself all along. Their veiled criticisms of our excellent *Bulletin* - and of this suggestion (we are told that there are members against it) - are perhaps unworthy of a public airing in print.

I feel strongly the the Executive committee should not be influenced by any such murmurings when the *Bulletin* itself provides a forum for a proper exchange of ideas on this and other topics.

Peter L. Britton, Box 90163, Mombasa.

Sir,

Recent correspondence in the *Bulletin* has discussed the need for a local ornithological journal. Many members of the Society are probably unaware that such a journal flourished briefly in Kenya nearly fifty years ago. Edited by H.F. Stoneham and A.H. Paget-Wilkes, *Bateleur* - A quarterly journal of African Ornithology, was published by private subscription between December 1928 and the end of 1931. Three complete volumes each consisting of between 120 and 140 pages in 4 parts were produced from the Stoneham Museum near Kitale and printed by the East African Standard. Each quarterly issue was sold at a price of four shillings by the proprietors and this was apparently the sole source of finance. Unhappily, the world wide depression in 1931 eventually caused the suspension of publication when a number of subscribers were unable to renew their subscriptions. So far as I am aware the journal was never revived.

The editors of *Bateleur* had the ambitious aim of producing an international journal to serve the ornithological needs of the whole of the African continent. They pointed out the need (which clearly still exists) for a publication where distribution records for migration studies, nesting records, local checklists, behaviour notes, etc., could be made available to other ornithologists. During its brief life the journal attracted contributions from many distinguished ornithologists including Claud B. Ticehurst, R.E. Moreau, David A. Bannerman, Herbert Friedmann and the editors themselves. More than half the articles published were of East African significance. Of particular interest in this connection is a paper by R.B. Sharpe, in 5 parts, on the Birds of Marsabit Mountain, and a checklist of the birds of the Trans Nzoia District of Kenya by a "Committee of East African Ornithologists". There are also dated migration and nesting records and short vocabularies of African bird names in Kiswahili and Dho-Luo. Even today one occasionally sees references in the ornithological literature to papers from *Bateleur*.

At least four sets of *Bateleur*, some incomplete, are available in libraries in the Nairobi area. The only complete sets that I have found are in the Belcher collection in the National Museum and in the Africana collection in the Macmillan Library. There are incomplete sets in the Chiromo branch of the University of Nairobi Library (missing Vol.1. part 3 and Vol.2. parts 1 and 3) and the library of the E.A.N.H.S. (missing Vol.1. all parts and Vol.2. part 1) and if any readers have spare copies of the missing parts I am sure that they would be greatly appreciated by the respective librarians.

Many of the exhibits and much of the library of the late Colonel Stoneham's private museum are now housed in the National Museum's new branch at Kitale. It would be a fitting tribute to the pioneering efforts of Colonel Stoneham that, if it is decided to publish a new local ornithological journal, it should bear the historic name of Bateleur.

N.J. Skinner, Box 30197, Nairobi.

Part of a letter on other topics received from D.K. Richards, Box 41951, Nairobi.

I would like to take this opportunity of commenting on the separate bird publication. Having only recently arrived in Kenya from Zambia I find the lack of such a bulletin rather a surprise, particularly as there appears to be no up to date books or checklist available, so a newcomer has no indication if the bird he is seeing is a rarity or common. I am sure that if a separate Journal/newsletter was published more bird watchers would send in reports of migration and any other observation which they may think unusual. As it stands at the moment one hesitates at sending in reports to the *Bulletin* in case the observation is quite commonplace. I am sure that ornithologists would soon pick out useful information and this in turn would lead to a greater knowledge of East African birds for everyone.

Before I close, I would like to make a comment on C.H. Fry's letter in the Oct./Nov. *Bulletin*, in which he states that to his knowledge there are only four journals serving the continent. I would like to point out that the Zambian Ornithological Society publishes a Bulletin (journal) periodically as well as their monthly newsletter.

D.K. Richards.

Part of a letter on other topics from Dr Jasper Parsons, Medical Research Council, Box 1971, Kisumu, Kenya.

As regards the debate over publication of a separate Ornithological Bulletin I can only endorse what has already been written in the recent letters. I would welcome such a publication, as I feel that the enclosed type of note may be too detailed for the general *EANHS Bulletin* reader.

Jasper Parsons.

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REVIEWS

AFRICA - THE DEVASTATED CONTINENT? by A. de Vos. Published by Dr W. Junk bv, The Hague. (1975). Pp. 236, 46 photographs, 4 maps. Price *c.* 190/00 E.A. Sh.

CONSERVATION FOR SURVIVAL - ETHIOPIA'S CHOICE by Leslie Brown. Published by Haile Sellassie University Press (1973). Pp.99, 3 maps. Price *c.*20/00 E.A. Sh.

A reviewer of a specialised book should either be an expert in the subject dealt with or a member of the readership aimed at. Both these books on the environment are written for students, and this assessment is made from the learner's angle.

In a world suffering from too much written matter and resulting mental indigestion, I give priority to books which are interesting as well as informative, not too academic, which hold the attention and make the reader feel he has learnt something. How do these two books qualify?

The author of *Africa - the devastated Continent?* is an FAO ecologist who, during his travels, has amassed a great deal of first-hand knowledge. Unfortunately he puts across his conclusions in the style of a speaker quietly droning on in a hot room with the windows shut. The soporific effect is increased by the presentation, which involves a lot of saying the same thing in different words. For example, we find 'Arid land management problems' on page 132, and 'Range management on arid lands' on page 169. They say repetition is the essence of teaching, but somehow not this way. Further confusion comes from the breakdown of the sections. In the text the main headings are in italics with the sub-headings in capitals, though the reverse is the case in the Contents. The Contents would look less of a mess if the sub-headings were indented. The index contains only species (both plant and animal); all non-specific subjects such as fire, Sahel and nitrogen are omitted.

When Dr de Vos is not confusing us with his interchangeable headings, he is teasing us with unexplained facts. For instance, guava is said to be an undesirable species, but we are not told why. Most beans, we know, add nitrogen to the soil, but fields of soya beans need inoculating with nitrogen fixing bacteria. How come? Then there is ***Acacia albida*** which has "the power to rejuvenate the soil". This is no mere nitrogen trick - "it affects all the physical and chemical characteristics of the soil". We humble students are left gasping for more information, but we dont get it.

All this does not mean that the book is valueless. The section dividing Africa into ecological zones is a useful reference. There are many flashes of wisdom, albeit rather lost in a sea of repitition and clichés. The author suggests, for instance, that aid should be restricted to countries with a population control programme (did anybody say 'aid with strings attached'?) and he lays the blame for the Sahel famine squarely on land degradation by man, rather than on sheer bad luck, or on climatic change induced by air pollution (a theory going around at UNEP these days). Printed throughout on art paper, the book is vastly over-priced at about Shs.190/-, and the photos, mostly from FAO, are unbelievably dull.

Half the length, one ninth the price, dealing with one country instead of a continent, minus art paper and photos, Leslie Brown's book does all that the first does not. It comes alive, makes the reader think and sends him away convinced that conservation is a subject that matters. The book is based on lectures given at Haile Sellassie University in 1971 (before the famine) but published in 1973 (after the famine was known to the world). One might have expected the foreword by the Minister of Agriculture to make some reference to the connection between conservation (lack of) and famine, but it does not.

Dr Brown is one of the few experts who does not over-estimate the background knowledge of his readers. As a result, everything is spelled out and the picture is clear. Some years ago a book called *The last migration* (Cronin) drew a pathetic picture of pastoral nomads in Iran who were forced, by government decree, to settle down. Sympathy was all with these romantic people. But after reading Dr Brown's chapter on pastoralism, complete with calculations of milk requirements, stock requirements and land requirements, one can see that the hard-hearted Iranian government was ecologically right.

Though it deals with Ethiopia's problems, *Conservation for survival* views these against a world background, so that the local student can see how he fits into the general conservation picture, and the foreign reader can learn general theories from specific examples. Each chapter is followed by 'Questions for Study and Research', designed to get the Ethiopian student into action in the field, and if you're not an Ethiopian student, it doesn't matter, the questions would translate easily into any setting.

We do not know why a book published in 1973 has only just reached the Society for review.* Now it is here, it should be read by everyone interested in land use.

Jill Donisthorpe.

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* This is because a copy was sent by surface mail and was lost in the post. As no review appeared, the HSU enquired about it and kindly sent another copy by air. PMA, Librarian.

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LAMU – A STUDY OF A SWAHILI TOWN by Usam Ghaidan, published by the East African Literature Bureau, Nairobi (1975) vii + 94 pp. with glossary, references and index, 52 figures (maps and photographs). Price: soft cover Shs.36/-, hard cover Shs. 50/-.

As another guide book to Lamu, Usam Ghaidan's Lamu is excellent if rather expensive, but as a study of the town it is disappointing. Most of the information can be found in greater detail in other more comprehensive publications. It is a pity that the architecture of Lamu, in which Mr Ghaidan has specialised, is dealt with so briefly as it would be of interest to many readers. He has, however, captured the atmosphere of this unique town in his writing and sensitive choice of illustrations.

Attention should be drawn to several errors. The captioning of Figures 16a and b and 22 and 23 has been transposed. Pate Island is referred to as Faza, and surely *tambuu* is a creeper whose leaf is chewed with *areca* nut?

E. Jean Brown.

NEW AQUARIUM

A remarkable Marine Aquarium has opened in Nairobi. Located on the first floor of Kenya Charity Sweepstake House, Mama Ngina Street, it features twenty sea-water tanks containing more than thirty species of colourful coral reef fish, plus live marine animals such as sea-anemones, starfish, and even molluscs!

Well-informed guides explain the names and habits of the fish. The Aquarium is open from Monday to Saturday, from 9.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. Entrance is Shs.3/- for adults, Shs.2/- for children.

Fleur Ng'weno, Box 42271, Nairobi.

REQUEST

Colour photographs of the following birds are required for display at the Fort Jesus Museum, Mombasa to enable visitors to identify them -

Black Kite
Sooty Gull
Didric Cuckoo
Yellow-collared Lovebird
Mangrove Kingfisher
Mousebirds
Little Swift
Pied Wagtail
Yellow-vented Bulbul
Spotted Flycatcher
Drongo
Pied Crow
Indian House Crow
Bronze Mannikin
Red-cheeked Cordon Bleu
Golden Palm Weaver
Collared Sunbird

If you have suitable slides or colour negatives from which standard size colour prints (5' x 3") can be made, and are prepared to lend them to enable these prints to be made, please send them to the undersigned or deliver them to Miss Allen at the Museum Library.

Every care will be taken of your transparencies or negatives and they will be returned to you as soon as possible.

John Karmali, Box 42202, Nairobi.

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FOR SALE

Two man tent with built-in groundsheet for sale in aid of the Society. Shs.800/- O.N.O. Apply to Miss Allen, Box 44486, Nairobi.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR, CONTINUED

The following three letters were all received (delayed in post) on the morning of 19th November. This whole issue of the Bulletin (save for the 'Functions' and 'New Members') had been typed and page numbered by that time. Rather than hold the letters over until next month, I include them here.

Ed.

Sir,

PROPOSED BIRD JOURNAL

Since several people have written supporting this project, perhaps it is time to consider the reasons against it. I am against it for three reasons -

1. The state of scientific knowledge at the present time.
2. The kind of people who make up our Society.
3. The cost (though, of course, if we do not want such a journal it is unnecessary to count the cost).

1. Science at the present time is at a most exciting stage of expansion. As C.S. Lewis remarks, we must not be taken in by Pope's famous line about "The proper study of mankind is man". The proper study of mankind is everything. And everything is becoming more and more everything every day. No longer can we study anything in isolation. If we wish to study an animal we must find out about the whole of its environment, the altitude (in metres please) the rainfall, the nature of the soil, the exact plants that it eats, which of those it prefers, and what each contributes to its metabolism. You must study its behaviour towards its companions and count its parasites and predators. This does not seem a good time to start another specialist journal, especially in a Society like our's.

2. What sort of a Society is our's indeed? The Constitution merely says "Its object shall be the advancement of the study of Natural Science in

Eastern Africa". In the Library there is a book called *East Africa (British) Its history, people, commerce, industries and resources* published in 1908-9. Under the heading "Societies and Associations" there are three entries, the Colonists' Association, Freemasonry and the Natural History Society. 'There is no part of the world' (it explains) 'so rich in fauna and flora of an interesting and attractive character, or one where opportunities for research are so easily available, as British East Africa. It is only natural, therefore to find that a society has been established there with the specific object of encouraging the general study of natural history in all its branches, as well as to give advice and direction to observers and collectors . . . . with the result that the East Africa and Uganda Natural History Society took practical shape, with the modest subscription of Rs.15 per annum. Ladies are cordially invited to join, and in time it is hoped that a museum, furnished with specimens by members, will be founded in Nairobi, together with a valuable reference library of natural history works.

'The Society is intended to include not only trained naturalists, but also the potential naturalists and lovers of nature who reside on farms and outlying stations, and who, if their observations can be directed into proper channels, may obtain material of the highest importance.'

Is not all this (except the Rs.15) still true? The Museum and Library are here but still need our hopes and efforts to sustain them and we are still a society of amateurs. We have specialists and professionals among us, fortunately; but most of our members even if they said they were more interested in birds than in anything else, would also confess to an interest in other creatures. Just because birds are in fashion just now and those who study them are the most energetic of our members, it is more than ever necessary to keep the door open, and obviously open, to contributions from other sections. I myself would like to see Palaeontology and the natural history of man appear again in the pages of our *Journal* and *Bulletin*.

3. As I said at the beginning, if for other reasons we do not want this journal, there is no need to count the cost. Obviously such a journal would cost something, especially if it were to be produced in a more professional-looking form than the present *Bulletin*. Either more money would have to be found or some would have to be taken from other projects, throwing the work of the Society out of balance at a time when some people have complained that it is out of balance already.

P.M. Allen, Box 44486, Nairobi.

Sir,

I refer to recent correspondence in the *Bulletin* about the Society producing an ornithological bulletin. I am very much against this suggestion for several reasons -

1. The Society's aim is to promote interest and knowledge in all branches of Natural History; it is not primarily concerned with ornithology or any other single aspect of natural history.
2. I have spoken to many members in Nairobi, and the majority of them said that they joined the Society because they were interested in 'nature'. The people who have advocated the idea of an ornithological bulletin do not

represent, in my opinion, the average member, and it is these average members who keep the Society going with their wide interests (and money).

3. It should be remembered that about a year ago there was some controversy that the *Bulletin* was printing too many bird articles, surely these protests reflect our members' feelings on the subject?

4. To go off on a different tack, I had a look at the *Journals* we have produced this year. Out of approximately 141 pages (the last *Journal* is not out at the time of writing), 14 pages were on birds, No.153. Of the rest we covered everything from marine life, insects, reptiles, mammals, vegetation and ecology. Does this not again reflect, in a different publication, our broad base of study?

5. I personally cannot see how one can isolate ornithology from the rest of the natural sciences.

Mr and Mrs Backhurst have done a very excellent job in producing the *Bulletin*, and I am sure it has done a great deal to increase interest in the Society both in East Africa and overseas. I would like to see the 'look' of the *Bulletin* improved, although I know this involves many problems, but let us keep the contents as they are now, supporting our name as a Natural History Society.

Dennis Angwin, Box 72833, Nairobi.

Sir,

On the issue of the bird bulletin which has been aired, so far favourably, in the pages of the *Bulletin*, I would like to voice my great disapproval for it. This is not because I am an entomologist, but solely for the reason that I am, first and foremost a naturalist, with the speciality coming second. I am interested in birds, but in a effort to understand them in their ecological niche.

On what is the 'demand' for this bulletin based? I find that most of the members who talk to me about the *Bulletin* ask me for more articles about insects, as one member put it "to cut down the feathers".

If the bird bulletin is decided upon, I will immediately apply for one on 'dudus'! There is as much sense in isolating one branch of natural history from the rest, as there is for another. To cater for a small scientific group, studying a small number of species is, to my mind, silly. If I asked for a bulletin for each group which comes up to this level, I would have to have four or five to cope with the East African weevils!

The questions which a natural scientist should ask are the following, and ALL the following - what is it? (Taxonomy); where does it live? (Geography and Ecology); what does it feed on? (Botany, Entomology, Herpetology, Mammalogy, Physiology, Ornithology, Anatomy and Ecology); what feeds on it? (Ecology again) and finally what do I know of its habits? For the naturalist all these questions and answers are very important, otherwise he labours in vain.

In which of the two bulletins would be put, say, the article by Miss D. Angwin on starlings and klipspringers (*EANHS Bull.* 1971:182)? Or to take it to its logical, but totally unrealistic extreme, where would go an article on a thrush, eating a snail, which was caught by a genet cat, but saved by flying into a fig tree to be caught by a hawk?! Of course the Editor's decision is final, but what happens if the present editor leaves and his place is taken by a man who is mainly interested in spiders or crabs?

The present vogue in ornithology (does it really exist, or is it because attractive and easily read reference books are available, unlike most groups?) could change very easily and quickly become a vogue in butterflies (I hope not!) or earthworms. Are we going to produce a specialised bulletin every time a new group comes into fashion?

Where would all the plants, birds, mammals etc., be without the lowly insect; lets have a specialised bulletin for them! One final thought, without changing the Society's emblem, a bird bulletin would *Have* to be called *Lophaetus*!

M.P. Clifton, Box 40658, Nairobi.

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SOCIETY FUNCTIONS

ANY TELEPHONE CALLS REGARDING FUNCTIONS SHOULD BE MADE TO MRS PRESTON, TELEPHONE 26828.

Monday 8 December 1975 at 5.15 p.m.: at the Museum Hall, Nairobi. Lecture by Dr Celia Kamau on "The Rift Valley Lakes".
12/13/14 December 1975: Camping visit to Saiwa Swamp, home of the Sitatunga, clawless otter and over 250 bird species. Leaders Mr and Mrs G. Preston. Distance from Nairobi about 400 km via Kitale. Campers will have to be self contained with all equipment, food and drinking water and be prepared for dampness under foot and very damp nights. Camping facilities are restricted and only 18 tents can be accommodated. It is suggested that members may like to extend their stay on account of the long distance involved. For further information and directions, please fill in the enclosed slip and return it without delay to Mrs G. Preston, Box 21342, Nairobi.
Wednesday 17 December 1975: Marine walk led by Mrs Fleur Ng'weno. Please meet at 9 a.m. on the verandah of Coraldene Beach Hotel, approx. 8 km north of Mombasa. Wear canvas shoes and be prepared to wade. The purpose of the meeting will be to study plants and animals in the tide pools on the old reef near the beach. The walk will last 2 - 3 hours.
Monday 12 January 1976 at 5.15 p.m.: at the Museum Hall, Nairobi, Lecture by Mr O.M. Mburu, Chief Conservator of Forests.
Sunday 25 January 1976: All day visit to Mtaro Estate between Ruiru and Thika by kind invitation of Mr and Mrs F. Hartmann. Details later.
Monday 9 February 1976 at 5.15 p.m. at the Museum Hall, Nairobi:
Mr S.G. Strazzeri will give a lecture on "Kosmology"
Saturday/Sunday 14/15 February 1976: Camping visit to Njoro, by kind invitation of Mrs Hindmarsh. Details later.
Monday 8 March 1976 at 5.15 p.m. at the Museum Hall, Nairobi: Annual General Meeting.

Wednesday morning bird walks meet in front of the National Museum, Nairobi every wednesday at 8.45 a.m. Beginners and students welcome. Children also as long as they are quiet.

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NEW MEMBERS

Full Members:

Prof. Dr Louis Van den Berghe, Box 24761, Karen.
Miss M. Buchanan, Box 30026, Nairobi.
Miss D. Costich, c/o Friends World College, Box 526, Machakos, Kenya.
Mrs J.A. Couldrey, Box 43323, Nairobi.
Mrs A. Dalhoff, Box 46749, Nairobi.
Mrs H. Everard, Box 139, Molo, Kenya.
Mr N. Gardiner, 64 Strathcona, Wallasey, Merseyside, U.K.
Miss B.A. Gross, c/o Friends World College, Box 526, Machakos, Kenya.
Dr Barry Hall, Box 41272, Nairobi.
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Compiled by Daphne Backhurst,
Box 29003, Kabete.

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BULLETIN

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NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Members of the Society (and non-members) are asked to follow these simple instructions when writing articles or letters for submission to the *Bulletin*. The *Bulletin* is presented each month in a duplicated format: the paper size is 20.5×23 cm (10×8 inches), line drawings can be reproduced but the area should not be more than 17.5×23 cm. Lettering on figures should preferably be in 'Letraset', neatly done in Indian ink or left blank: if the last method is followed, the lettering should be indicated on an overlaying sheet and should *not* be done on the figure. Figures should be prepared on good quality white writing paper and not on Bristol Board or other thick material. Whenever plants or animals are mentioned the scientific name should also be given but not in parenthesis. Trinomials should not be used unless there is good reason to do so. Author's names of species are not required.

Contributions may be typed (preferably) or written clearly and should be sent to: G. C. Backhurst, Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi, Kenya. Receipt of contributions will be acknowledged.

EANHS BULLETIN JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1976

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COMPLEMENTARY NOTE TO "TWO NOTES ON KENYA MARINE LIFE"

BY FLEUR NG'WENO

In *EANHS BULLETIN* 1975:55 Fleur Ng'Weno reported on an *Acanthaster planci* she found 'on the coral rubble off Ras Iwetine at the southern end of Bamburi Beach on 30th March 1975. Complementary to that interesting note I have to give the information that I observed, photographed and collected two specimens of the Crown of Thorns Starfish in a diving excursion in the base of the outer slope of Andromache Reef southward of Mombasa on 5th March 1970. The two animals were resting on reef rock rounded by stony corals (*Echinopora* and *Fungia*), soft corals (*Xenia*) and calcareous algae in a depth of 14 m. Both specimens were reddish purple on colour and at least 20 cm across, like the example described by Fleur Ng'Weno from Bamburi Beach. It is interesting that both observations were made in March. I was diving several times in the Andrmache Reef in January too but did not encounter the Crown of Thorns. So it may be expected that *Acanthaster planci* migrate in March from deeper water to the shores of Kenya. In conclusion, we can notice that up to today *Acanthaster planci* is fairly rare off Kenya and the rich and beautiful coral reefs of the coast are not in danger by the Crown of Thorns Plague as in other areas.

One of the 1970 specimens is in the scientific collection of the Museum of Natural History of the Humboldt University of Berlin, German Democratic Republic.

Dietrich H.H. Kühlmann,
Curator of Marine Animals, Museum of Natural History,
104 Berlin, Invalidenstr. 43, German Democratic Republic.

COMMENT ON Dr KÜHLMANN'S "COMPLEMENTARY NOTE TO TWO NOTES ON KENYA MARINE LIFE"

Since Dr Kühlmann photographed and collected the Crown of Thorns Starfish *Acanthaster planci* in 1970, there have been increasing records of this starfish on the Kenya Coast. But the question arises whether an increase in sightings reflects an increase in the *A. planci* population, or an increase in gogglers on the lookout for Crown of Thorns.

We observed *A. planci* again in early September, 1975 in the same area of coral rubble off Ras Iwetine; it was similar to the individual we had seen in March.

There is a much smaller specimen of *A. planci* in the Marine Aquarium, Nairobi. Every time I have seen it, it has been a dull light brown colour, like a dried specimen, although it was alive and active.

Fleur Ng'Weno, Box 42271, Nairobi.

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FURTHER NOTES ON THE NESTING COLONY OF MARABOU STORKS AT SHINYANGA TANZANIA

In the October/November 1975 issue of the *EANHS Bulletin* mention was made of a nesting colony of the marabou stork in Shinyanga town, Tanzania. As the main road to Shinyanga from the Mwadui Mine enters Shinyanga on the eastern side, the new colony is on the east side of town across from the railway yard near the President's summer house and the residence of the District Commissioner.

Observations on 11 September of the same colony were made, in which two half-grown young birds (no dark markings visible) were noted in the first tree (eastern group) and one young bird in a nest in the other tree group (300 m distant near the cotton authority offices). On the west side of town near the butchery the birds have been active for at least three years (pers. comm. N. Dillworth) in two *Acacias* but evidence of six adult birds found dead in the trees during September suggests that local people are molesting them and forcing a change of residence. Ten nests were noted in one *Acacia* near the butchery and one nest in another tree, but none contained young birds. In November there was no evidence of immature birds in the nests and in fact, the number of nests had decreased from 8 observed in July to 3 in tree 1, from 13 nests to 2 in tree 2 and in the second tree group, from 5 nests to 3 in one tree and from 7 nests to 5 in the other. In the *Acacia* near the butchery in November there were only 5 nests as compared to 10 in September with some evidence of nesting material having fallen to the ground.

Slim Easton, Box 129, Mwanza, Tanzania.

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PROCAMBARUS CLARKII - RED LOUISIANA SWAMP CRAYFISH

We are carrying out a 14 month survey of *P. clarkii* in Lake Naivasha as part of a study to establish the fisheries potential of the species. At the smae time we are surveying its distribution throughout Kenya. Members are asked to let us know if they have any information concerning the occurrence of the species in their locality or elsewhere. For this purpose a questionnaire is included in this month's *Bulletin*.

We are further trying to disseminate information concerning the use of the species for human consumption as it does not seem to be generally acceptable in Kenya, although it is farmed in the U.S.A. and Japan. Any members who have eaten the beast are invited to send us their recipes which will be collected and passed on to our Home Economics Department.

Roger Lowery & Archie Mendes,
Kenyatta College, Box 43844, Nairobi.

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ADDITIONS TO THE KENYA AVIFAUNA

During a visit to Moyale on the Kenya/Ethiopia border on 21st June 1975, we observed two species hitherto unrecorded from Kenya. Although new records for the country, they do not represent any significant extensions of range.

FRANCOLINUS CASTANEICOLLIS SALVADORI CHESTNUT-NAPED FRANCOLIN

One observed calling from a rocky hillside some six kilometres south of Moyale township. Red bill and legs together with clear creamy-buff underparts were plainly visible. The bird was observed through a twentyfive power telescope for a short period, and fully fitted the discription of the race *Francolinus castaneicollis atrifrons* Conover occurring in the Mega area of southern Ethiopia.

PASSER SWAINSONII (RUEPELL) SWAINSON'S SPARROW

Many were observed in Moyale township and the surrounding hill country. They were noticeably smaller than the Parrot-billed Sparrow *Passer gongonenis* which occurred lower down on the plains. Bill size was also considerably smaller and less robust. *Passer gongonensis* did not appear to reach high country at all, and it is quite possible that *P. swainsonii* has recently spread further south in the Ethiopian highlands and now reached the southern limit of this habitat.

D.A. Turner and A.D. Forbes-Watson, Box 48019, Nairobi.

MADAGASCAR BEE - EATER *MEROPS SUPERCILIOSUS* NESTING ON TANA RIVER

On 18th September 1975 we came across a breeding colony of approximately fifty Madagascar Bee-eaters *Merops s. superciliosus* in a vertical sandy bank on the Tana River in Meru National Park.

The nest holes were close to the top of the river bank and within a few metres of the track running alongside the river towards Adamson's Falls. Activity at the colony indicated that the birds were feeding young in the nests.

This, we understand, is the furthest inland breeding record of this species in East Africa.

D.A. and K. Bullock, Le Feugeral House, La Moye, Jersey, Channel Islands.

ATTACK ON PELICAN BY PYTHON *PYTHON SEBAE* AT LAKE NAKURU

On 5 November 1973 at 4 p.m. on a small inlet on the western shore of Lake Nakuru I observed the following encounter.

A group of 15 adult White Pelicans *Pelecanus onocrotalus* were standing in shallow water at the edge of the lake preening by the side of a mudbank about 1 m in height. The preening involves frequent immersion of beak and head to splash water over wings and back. This is followed by repeated arching of the neck over the back and wings to run the beak through the feathers. One adult in the middle of the group was seen to dip its head in the water in this way and suddenly to start flapping both wings hard, slamming them down on the water. The surrounding birds in the group drew back up to 1.5 m away and ceased preening. No other birds were in the proximity. After 15 s the pelican drew its head up out of the water into an upright position, its neck gripped by two coils of a python whose head stretched at least 15 cm in front of the pelican's beak enabling the bird to strike at it with one wing, which it did for about three minutes, threshing around in the water. The snake was then right out of the water and starting to curl over the back of the bird, it was not less than 2 m long. The snake wound another coil around the neck of the bird drawing its head close in to the bird's neck. This caused the pelican to become submerged, although its wings still flapped slowly above the water. After approximately 40 s the wings were again beaten hard on the surface and the pelican abruptly drew itself free and retreated out of the water to resume its preening, perched on top of the mudbank, apparently uninjured.

The possibility of the python as an occasional aquatic predator on large birds seems likely but is unrecorded, although several observations have been made of crocodile taking pelicans (Pitman 1962).

REFERENCE:

Pitman, C.R.S. 1962 Snake and Lizard predators of birds. *Bull. Br. Orn. Club* 82:35.

Richard Grove, 275 Hills Road, Cambridge, England.

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LAUGHING DOVE OBSERVATIONS

On 10th November 1975, at Riverside Drive, Nairobi, my gardener brought me a nestling Laughing Dove *Streptopelia senegalensis* which he had found beneath a mighty, rampant bougainvillea.

Grey feathers overlapping beige, the young bird presented a very odd appearance. About ten centimetres in length it had a brilliant red spot on the tip of the upper mandible and a solid-looking nuchal crest, 1.5 cm long.

The nest from which the bird had fallen, or jumped, was about seven metres high - too high for our longest ladder. An artificial nest was constructed of chicken wire, lined with twigs and shredded palm leaves and this was placed about four metres from the original nest and three metres from the ground.

Of the three Laughing Doves visiting the area no bird seemed to be interested between the hours of 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. when the nest was under periodic observation. Finally, when I had resigned myself to the thought of hand-rearing the youngster, a prolonged cheeping sound came from the direction of the artificial nest; an adult bird left the treetops, went straight into the foliage sheltering the nestling and emerged with it, nuchal crest held in bill.

The limp bird was carried to a branch between the two nests and here, while squatting with shimmering wings, it was fed from the mouth of the adult. The young was then moved again, fed again and lifted into the real nest.

The literature was consulted but no reference was found to either crest or red spot on bill.

The following day, another, smaller youngster, was found and brought along by my Collie. This one had a crest but a blackish tip to the upper mandible. The little bird was placed in the hand-made nest three times and three times it immediately threw itself out. It looked weak, eyes were half closed and legs not strong. I left it on the ground and, with cameras ready, hoped to get pictures of the bird being carried away by its crest, but although it met the adults twice and was fed, there were too many interruptions. Maurading cats, dogs, motor cars, and visitors on foot are not conducive to this kind of study. Finally the bird was moved to a place of safety and is being hand-reared.

The question mark remains. What is the purpose of the crest? Is it there to provide a bill-hold for the parents to return ever-falling youngsters to their rightful homes?

Jean Hayes, Box 14278, Nairobi.

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DYED WADERS FROM AFRICA

The studies of the migrations of waders in Africa are still in their infancy when compared with those in North Western Europe. This is partly due to the fact that wader enthusiasts are few and far between, the majority being found in Kenya and South Africa. Also waders are smallish birds and therefore do not lend themselves to high recovery rates, and it is significant that the majority of recoveries are made by other ringers. As a result, the recovery rates of African ringed waders is very low. We therefore know little about the migration routes through Africa and between the African and Palaearctic regions.

In an attempt to improve our understanding of the migration patterns of waders, large numbers of Knot *Calidris canutus*, Sanderling *C. alba* and Curlew Sandpiper *C. ferruginea* will be dye-marked in the Cape Province by the Western Cape Wader Study Group in early 1976 before the birds depart for their northward migration.

We appeal to all bird watchers to look out for these marked birds during the spring and autumn passage of 1976. If you do see a marked bird, which should be especially obvious in flight, please contact either: A.J. Prater, British Trust for Ornithology, Beech Grove, Tring, Herts, England, or: Dr R.W. Summers, Percy FitzPatrick Institute of African Ornithology, University of Cape Town, South Africa; giving as many details as possible, including the colour of the dye and its position on the bird.

The scanty ringing evidence suggests that the migration routes of these three species may cross anywhere between western Europe and central Asia, so if you know a site where any of these species occur on spring (April-May) or autumn (August-October) passage, please keep a special lookout.

R.W. Summers, Percy FitzPatrick Institute of African Ornithology,
University of Capetown, Rondebosch 7700, South Africa.

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FIELD TRIP TO LAKE EYASI, NORTH CENTRAL TANZANIA

On 25th July 1975 a trip was made to Lake Eyasi (south of the Serengeti National Park). I left Mwanza town around 1000 hrs and after travelling southeast through Maswa town (formerly Shanwa=Nyalikungu) and Lalago a stop was made for the night at the Ndoloji Catholic Mission (14 km south of Kishapu town), due to the ban on driving after 1400 hrs on Sundays in Tanzania. The following morning a party of seven of us left in two 4-wheel drive vehicles at 0800 hrs taking a track southeast through Somagedi. Before reaching Hendawashi villiage we crossed over the dry Sanga river at Mwabuso into Maswa district and then proceeded on through the villages of Mwamanoni, Mwalaleli, Latta and crossed more dry rivers. After passing a cattle market at Mwanyomba a fork in the road is reached. The right fork takes you to the southern edge of the lake north of the Simbiti river where a small number of people are mining salt. The left fork proceeds on towards the escarpment (Rift Valley wall) ending just before you reach the Lukale river which was also dry at this time. At the point where the Lukale river reaches the bottom of the escarpment there are three separate rock-lined pools of water called the Limbita Tanks. They were used formerly in the area for irrigation but the spoor of baboons was the only indication of present usage.

We took the right fork to visit the salt workings and then found a less used track working our way round the lake shore until we located the gorge where the Lukale river cuts through the escarpment. We arrived at this point around 1230 hrs. I would recommend that people wishing to visit the lake and salt workings take the right fork as there is no track running between the lake and the Limbita Tanks which necessitated our driving across country through the Acacia bush. The route in from Ndololeji is not passable during the rainy season (March - June) due to the lack of bridges over the river beds and, during the rains, travel would be difficult along the lake shore. During the dry season (July - Sept.) one can drive along the edge of the lake in a Landrover throughout its length, being careful not to venture too close to the centre where the moist bottom would cause problems (not recommended for saloon cars). At the northern edge of the Lake, now in Masai district, we noted a small deposit of water and a flock of 100 Lesser Flamingos *Phoenicopterus minor*, and one Saddle-bill Stork *Ephippiorhynchus senegalensis*. Other forms of wildlife were abundant despite the lack of grassy vegetation. All the Wataturu people had left the area taking their livestock to regions where grass was more available. We saw what appeared to be a resident herd of wildebeest *Connochaetes taurinus* and Zebra *Equus burchelli*. We also observed a group of 22 giraffe *Giraffa camelopardalis*; a herd of Thomson's gazelle *Gazella thomsonii* and a number of Dik-dik *Rhynchotragus* sp. The Kori Bustard *Otis kori*, appeared to be the dominant ground bird but White-bellied Bustards *Eupodotis senegalensis* were seen as well as a species of guinea fowl (most likely the crested) and the grey-breasted spurfowl *Francolinus rufopictus*.

After making camp and spending the night in a clearing between the lake shore and the escarpment we awoke at dawn to the chattering of Fischer's Lovebirds *Agapornis fischeri* and a small number of Rufous-tailed Weavers *Histurgops ruficauda* seen leaving their grass ball-like nests in the Acacias nearby. We drove to the Limbita Tanks and noticed several nests of Egyptian Vulture *Neophron perconopterus* overlooking the sheer escarpment above the tanks. Leaving the area at 1600 hrs we arrived back at the mission station around 2000 hrs.

Slim Easton, Box 129, Mwanza, Tanzania.

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A RECORD OF THE ABYSSINIAN LONG - EARED OWL *ASIO OTUS* FROM MOUNT KENYA

During the early hours of 7th August 1975 while camping near the top of the Sirimon Track on Mt. Kenya at an altitude of approximately 2800 m, an owl called from directly over my tent, and was immediately answered by another a short distance away. The call was rather soft yet long and drawn out, a "oooo-oooom" rising slightly in pitch.

By the time I had clambered out of the tent, both birds had moved further down the ridge, and after calling a few more times finally flew out of earshot.

The call was totally unlike any other owl I have heard, and I am firmly convinced it came from a pair of Abyssinian Long-eared Owls *Asio otus*, an extremely rare species confined to the higher forested area of Mt. Kenya, and which has not been recorded positively in Kenya for many years.

I would request anyone camping in this area in the near future to keep a special watch for this species, and hopefully confirm its continued existence on the mountain.

D.A. Turner, Box 48019, Nairobi.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

ORNITHOLOGICAL PUBLICATION

Publishing two large *Bulletins*, one on general subjects and one on ornithology, seems to me to be both expensive and a great deal of work for one editor. Perhaps the solution would be to revert to the monthly Newsletter containing functions and non-ornithological letters and notes, and put out a complete Ornithological Bulletin quarterly. The general *Newsletter* and the new *Bulletin* could have different Editors.

June Dirks, Box 30601, Nairobi.

Sir,

Re. the suggestion for a separate "Bird Journal". It seems to me that the creation of an additional publication dealing only with birds will lead to financial problems. Already the *Journal* is issued in separate papers, so that those who are interested in birds need retain only the appropriate papers. Would it be possible to issue the *Bulletin*, which is largely birds anyway, in such a way that notes other than on birds were held back until there were enough to complete a whole issue, and turn out wholly bird numbers until then? Alternatively, why not sort out some of the more important bird notes and combine them, say once or twice a year, to form an issue of the *Journal*. I can see no objection to having an issue containing material from more than one author, if it were devoted to one subject such as birds. The *Bulletin* could then be cut to 3 - 4 issues a year which would save the Society postage.

If the Society splits into the "Birdos" (to use an Australian abbreviation) and the "Others", I can see a great danger that neither portion will remain a viable entity; I should not like to see any move made that might lead to such a catastrophe.

J.R. Hudson, "Aberfeldie", Peckon's Hill,
Ludwell, Shaftesbury, Dorset, SP7 0PN.

Sir,

The E.A.N.H.S. is to my mind caught up with the disease that is world wide "Fragmentation" be it tribal, ethnic, religious or what have you. Nobody seems to want to belong to a long established, experienced and financially solvent group if that group does not devote itself exclusively to their interests.

Now it is the turn of the "feathers" versus the "rest". I would ask this question - if the feathers were to withdraw their articles, would the "rest" be able to fill the *Bulletin* with as many interesting articles? By the very varied nature of the subjects involved we all need each other to keep the *Bulletin* interesting and going.

I am an all-round interested amateur and I wonder, strictly speaking, how many of our 514 local members fall into this category and how they would vote if given the chance in the next three editions of the *Bulletin.*

Mrs L.C. Fordyce, Box 30438, Nairobi.

Sir,

I have thus far refrained from joining those who have written on the subject of the proposal for a new ornithological journal published in East Africa, firstly because I have been away in Ethiopia and secondly because while many have written in favour no one had until the last issue expressed any opposing view; this has now been done by Miss Allen, Miss Angwin and Mr Clifton.

I am on the whole opposed to the publication of yet another journal because, in my opinion, there are already too many obscure journals which do not reach an international public. The *Jl E. Africa nat. Hist Soc. Nat. Mus.* is, unfortunately, one of these, at least in ornithological circles, while the basic obscurity of the Bulletin published by the Zambian Ornithological Society is well illustrated by the fact that Dr Fry had never heard of it; I have heard of it, but have no means of seeing it. Writing as one who must, periodically search through literature in order to collect material for books, I deplore the publication of *important* material in obscure journals which are unlikely to be found in any well-established ornithological library, such as the Edward Grey Institute in Oxford. It is bad enough to have to read material in three main American Journals; two British; two French; one Dutch; three in German; one in Spanish and at least two in Scandinavian languages without having to search for example, material published by Museums (sometimes because no one else will accept it as it stands) and in the odd bulletins which do not have a wide circulation. I recently begged an observer who has several hundred hours observation at the nest of a Lammergeier *not* to publish it in *Lesotho Notes & Records* the result will probably be that it will never see the light of day at all. So, I am firmly *against* another journal.

I am also in sympathy with those who would prefer the Society's publications to maintain a multi-discipline approach. I am best known as an ornithologist, and a specialist in certain groups at that, but my interests are much wider as, I think, is borne out by my publications in recent years. I believe the era of rather narrow specialisation may be passing; and that a much wider understanding of natural history in general is once more to be valued. Mr Clifton puts this well; and I would basically put it as follows. One needs to know what one stands on (Geology, Soils); what grows on it (Botany); what eat that (Mammals, Reptiles, Birds, Insects); and sometimes, what eats them. This sort of approach can be applied both above and below water; and if I had been taught that way at school and University I should know a great deal more now. Instead, I was told that birds were an amateur's group and that real scientists hardly ever left the laboratory, an attitude now, thank Goodness, thoroughly outworn.

I do not see why ornithologists should object, therefore, to seeing in the *Bulletin* or the *Journal* articles about other animals or plants that they themselves don't know much about, they can learn. The narrow view is to be deplored. Some years ago I was going out with a great friend of mine to look at a Martial Eagle's nest and, as we approached it cautiously (to avoid scaring a shy and keen eyed bird) we came on a magnificent bull kudu at about thirty yards range. For minutes I was able to feast my eyes on this superb animal, while my friend gnawed his nails in impatience. Since the Martial Eagle's nest contained a large young bird, which in fact flew when we tried to ring it, it would have been very long odds against seeing the adults anyway; and I could only pity anyone with so narrow a view that he could not even look with interest at a superb animal seldom seen to such advantage, even in southern Africa, where they are admittedly more commonplace than in Kenya.

I am also most heartily agin excessive professionalism; the use of the modern scientific jargonese (all but unintelligible and usually not to be found in even the enlarged versions of English Dictionaries); and complex mathematics, which are often not needed in a paper but which are included merely to show what a virtuoso in this respect the author is. I used to boast that I had got through a not inconsiderable agricultural career without ever touching a plough, milking a cow, or knowing anything whatever about statistics. Nowadays, I admit, I would not have got anywhere near starting that career at all because I would not have passed O level mathematics. A good many years ago (I think in 1961) the late Reg Moreau (who had no academic qualifications at all but who nevertheless was one of the finest naturalists Africa has known), at that time editor of *Ibis* (which he did brilliantly) said to me sadly that for the first time he could remember an issue was being produced without an article by an amateur in it. Professionals could with advantage remember that a good many of the journals they now use were started by amateurs, whom they now tend to despise, or at least regard with faint scorn.

It seems to me that the *Bulletin*, which was I believe originally started as a sort of newsletter for chatty little items, has now rather outgrown this state and is including important new material. For instance, Miss Angwin's note about Klipspringers and Redwing Starlings has been quoted by Valerie Gargett in an article on the same subject in *Bull. Br. Orn Club*; and in the last issue there was a nice first record of a scimitar-bill feeding a young honeyguide. These are items of an altogether different class to e.g. an account of Society outings, or forthcoming functions. I do see, therefore that ornithologists (or for that matter scientists with something more serious and original to communicate in other disciplines) may now feel that they would like to see their unusual records published in some more permanent form than a cyclostyled bulletin. However, this should not be taken as any criticism on my part for the format and content of the present bulletin, for I realise better than most the difficulties and sacrifice of time that its production involves on *your* part, Mr Editor. I think we are grateful to you for doing so much.

There are two established scientific journals in East Africa at present, the *Jl E. Afr. nat. Hist. Soc. Nat. Mus.* and the *E. Afr. Wildl. J.* The latter has been largely used as a vehicle for papers by professional scientists working at e.g. the Serengeti Research Institute; and it has mainly been concerned with large mammals, sometimes reptiles. The Society's *Journal* covers a much wider field, and will, I hope, continue to do so. The only thing which I deplore about it is the fact that it appears in bits and pieces, which are very likely indeed to get lost, either in the post, or among the piles of paper in my study.

It seems to me that there is room for editorial collaboration in these two journals (I have not discussed this with Dr Sale, so this is only my own view) and this is particularly so because the E.A. Wildlife Society's Scientific and Technical Committee has set up working groups covering all major phyla and their habitats, a procedure which will inevitably result in papers of a much wider variety than at present in this journal. I would like to see both these journals produced as numbers or issues at regular intervals (as the E.A. Wildlife journal already is, but as the E.A.N.H.S. journal has abandoned) and I would like to see an enlarged section for short notes in both. The example I have in mind is the Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society, which has numerous articles of high scientific content, plus a long section of short notes, arranged in the order of phyla. An ornithologist, mammalogist, ichthyologist, or entomologist knows that for practical purposes *all* Indian Natural History work of any importance will be found in that one journal. Here, we have two, and I would prefer to see both of these enlarged rather than start yet another, specifically devoted to birds or any other group. If ornithologists are irritated by seeing an article on reptiles they they can skip it. There might be merit in making one issue a year mainly devoted to mammals, another to birds etc. But on the whole I am for the broad approach.

Mr Peter Lack in an earlier letter drew attention to the difficulty and delay of getting material published in international journals. This applies particularly to long papers, less so to short notes; *Bull. Br. Orn. Club* is the classic vehicle for ornithological shorts, and *Ostrich* also has a very good short note section, though it prefers material from southern Africa. Therefore, to accomodate the now numerous and valuable short notes now appearing in the *Bulletin* I would suggest enlarged sections for these in our two existing journals rather than something entirely new.

That does not get over the problem of where to publish a long, or very long paper which is likely to be of interest outside East Africa. The thing that makes me blench at the moment is the analysis, being undertaken by myself and Peter Britton, of the thousands of Nest Record cards that have now accumulated, which we intend to combine with all we can locate in the literature of the past, so that, as from the date of publication, *all* that is known of the breeding of East African birds will be available in *one* paper. But it will be a long paper. Since it is an E.A.N.H.S. project, the *Jl E. Afr. nat. Hist. Soc. Nat. Mus.* obviously ought to publish it, and we do not want to told, after many monthes of sweat, midnight oil and toil, that it is too long to publish and that there isn't any money.

Thus I am against another journal, devoted especially to ornithology, but would like to see both existing journals appear regularly in parts and with a strengthened and enlarged short notes section to accept some of the material now appearing in the *Bulletin*. I am against a narrow sectional approach too, which cuts both ways. Those who feel that too much material on birds is published now have the remedy in their own hands - produce material on your own subject, as someone said in the *Bulletin* long ago.

L.H. Brown, Box 24916, Karen, Kenya.

Sir,

Mr D.K. Richard's letter in the last issue requires some comment from your Librarian. The fact that he misses the *Bull. Zambian Ornith. Soc.* is alas! a sign of poverty, not riches. There used to be a *Zambian (Northern Rhodesian) Journal* on the same lines as the *Uganda Journal* and *Tanzania Notes & Records*, but it came to an end in 1965. The *Bull. Zambian Ornith. Soc.* is all that remains. The same thing seems to have happened to the *Nigerian Field*, which seems to have shrivelled into the *Nigerian Ornith. Soc. Bull.* If (which God forbid) the E.A.N.H.S. came to an end, I am sure the ornithologists would start a new journal and keep going as long as they could lift binoculars.

There is no question of stopping the *Bulletin* altogether, and I think there is much to be said for Mr Forbes-Watson's suggestion that the Editor should, at his discretion, issue an "Ornithological Number" from time to time either in the current sequence or as a special issue. And this I imagine he could do without asking leave of anyone, merely reporting it to Committee, as long as the form of the *Bulletin* does not change, and the special number is uniform.

The muddled thinking in Mr Britton's letter does that able worker less than justice. Apparently he cannot distinguish between various people who have complained that there is too much in the *Bulletin* about birds, and those partakers in the present discussion who wish to keep all the material about birds in the *Bulletin*. As for such "veiled criticism being unworthy of a public airing" - Oh come, half the population is of below average intelligence, and we are not all in the top half. There is no need to call in the "Gestapo" whenever anyone tries to say what he is trying to think. And why "veiled"? If any of this discussion has been "veiled", what price the naked truth?

P.M. Allen, Librarian.

Sir,

Concerning the proposed East African bird journal/bulletin. I am all in favour of this. Many people, I am sure, would send in notes and records to such a publication which they hesitate to send to the ppresent *Bulletin*. Peter Lack's letter in the Oct/Nov issue with its suggested format seems to me to embody some good ideas, as does Dr Duffus' in the latest issue.

Margaret Carswell, Dept. of Surgery, Box 7051, Kampala, Uganda.

Sir,

The suggestion of D.J. Pearson (*EANHS BULL.* 1975:95) is one that I would support on the whole, i.e. a regular, purely ornithological, publication for East Africa.

However, I would dare to stick my neck out and suggest a more radical change.

A few years ago I suggested that some form of annual bird report be established in East Africa (*EANHS Bull.* 1971:201-2). Response to the original note was nil, although a number of people contacted me individually by letter almost unanimously supporting the idea, some with the reservation that a substitute for me as a collator might be difficult to find were I to leave East Africa. Before such a report could become a meaningful annual compilation of records I decided that a revision of the distribution of birds in East Africa *per* Mackworth-Praed & Grant, Series I, would be necessary. This was duly completed and accepted for publication in the Society's *Journal.*

Would it now be possible to compile useful distributional data, say twice yearly, and publish this in the suggested new publication? Many observers have useful records, that they may publish as separate notes, or not at all, which would be quite suitable for a section modelled on a typical 'County Report' of Great Britain.

Perhaps the Ringing Report and the Report of the Nest Record Scheme could also find a home here.

Clive Mann, 13a Margaret Road, London N16.

Sir,

It may well be that after so much correspondence on the subject in the *Bulletin* you may feel that this letter comes too late. But I would like to record my appreciation for our *EANHS Bulletin* as it is, and for the very hard working people who get it out to members each time. Should these same people be burdened with yet more tedious distribution work? I am sure members would be interested in any records that "idle people" might be stimulated to submit to the *Bulletin* (the writer was stimulated by that remark to write this letter!).

Thank you again for the *Bulletin* and for all the fascinating facts I have enjoyed gleaning from them.

Mrs J.D.M. Silvester, Box 30333, Nairobi.

Sir,

I would like to comment on one or two arguments that have recently been put forward by correspondents against the production of a separate ornithological bulletin.

First, it has been implied that all naturalists should be equally interested in all aspects of natural history. This is no doubt laudable, but I am afraid that it is simply not true: most people are passionately interested in one particular group, and are interested in other aspects only insofar as they affect "their" group. You can see this reflected in many of the *Bulletin's* articles: although they may cover a multitude of topics, the *emphasis* in each case is in one direction only.

For many contributors, at any rate, it is clear that their particular emphasis is on birds. Otherwise, Miss Angwin and Mr Clifton would not have cause to complain of "too many feathers" The solution offered - a separate bulletin - seems fair to both sides. Those who are particularly interested in birds could read (and write) more about them: in particular, they could submit more detailed records which would presumably be completely unacceptable to the anti-feather group. Those who are more interested in other aspects would have more space in the *Bulletin* for their own interests.

The question, then, seems to me to be simply: how many members are sufficiently interested in birds to want to contribute to and read a separate bulletin? There seems to be two obvious ways of testing this apart from recordings one's impressions of What the Average Member Thinks:

1) Circulate a questionnaire asking: Do you want a separate ornithological bulletin?

2) If a reasonable number of members agree, then have a trail run for, say, a year. If the new bulletin is extensively contributed to and widely read, its existence will be empirically justified: otherwise, it will die a natural death, and no more will be heard.

In other words, the onus of success lies with those in favour of the new bulletin: those who are against it would be at liberty to express their disapproval by not supporting it. Of course, the same criteria would be applicable to Mr Clifton's four or five weevil bulletins.

A.E. Butterworth, Box 43640, Nairobi.

THE PROPOSED BIRD BULLETIN

Now that there have been almost thirty communications on the subject of the proposed bird bulletin, it seems time to call a halt and to review the situation.

You will find a questionnaire enclosed with this *Bulletin*. Please complete it and send it in to the Secretary, E.A.N.H.S., Box 44486, Nairobi as soon as possible. If you live abroad, it would be appreciated if you would kindly return your completed questionnaire by airmail.

It seems to me, from reading all the letters carefully, that there are really three alternatives being advocated by those who have written in; I have summarised them below although I felt it necessary to point out various misconceptions where they exist.

1. THE *JOURNAL* AND THE *BULLETIN* PLUS A SEPARATE QUARTERLY BIRD BULLETIN

The *Journal* would be as at present. The *Bulletin* would appear as at present but without most of the articles on birds. The existence of the new bird bulletin would encourage people to send in their observations: a records section similar to those found in typical British county reports would enable observations to be presented in a concise way - less work for the observer and less space used. In time ornithologists would be able to use the new bulletin as the main source for finding out what is happening in East African ornithology. Papers in other journals dealing with E.A. birds would be mentioned or summarised. Once established, less E.A. material would be published in overseas journals. If produced by photolithography it would be able to accept photographs, be physically smaller and might well cost less to produce and dispatch than does the present *Bulletin*.

2. THE *JOURNAL* AND *BULLETIN* AS NOW

Many of the letters against the bird bulletin show that their writers have not grasped the basic arguments involved. Nobody wants to break up the Society, the *Bulletin* or the *Journal*; what is wanted is to keep more information on E.A. Birds published within the framework of the Society - a separate bird bulletin would achieve this. Our publications are not obscure, they are sent to about 200 overseas institutions (including the E.G.I. and the British Museum). Of course we are a natural history society but if the members interested in birds are numerous and want the convenience of having a magazine designed to increase the knowledge of E.A. birds, how can this be bad? It will certainly not lead to the demand for *one* bulletin on E.A. weevils, let alone for four or five; however, a separate bird bulletin ought to stimulate naturalists to write more articles on other biological subjects for inclusion in the *EANHS Bulletin* than they do at present.

3. A CONVENTIONAL JOURNAL AND A NEWSLETTER

If our *Journal* could be published *regularly*, with various sections covering all groups, plus short notes, reviews and letters, it is quite possible that nobody would have suggested the new bird bulletin at all. We, as a Society, with our authors and printers had a terrible record of unpunctuality in the 1960's; the switch to the separate paper format has meant that there are fewer factors working to delay the publication of each individual paper. A move back to the convential type of journal is unlikely to be popular with members of the Editorial Sub Committee (although I cannot speak for them) moreover, delays caused by authors and printers would still occur, as they did in the past. A newsletter of one or two sides would have to be produced to cover Society functions. This third alternative, even if it were possible, would automatically mean the end of the *Bulletin*.

Graeme Backhurst, Box 29003, Nairobi, Kenya.

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WILD FLOWERS OF MALAWI

Mrs B.C. Lamport-Stokes of The Society of Malawi has written to point out that her Society has world rights (except in South Africa) for selling this book. It can be obtained from them at Box 125, Blantyre, Malawi at Malawi Kwacha 13.00 (considerably less than R.12.50). .

Ed.

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NATURAL HISTORY PHOTOGRAPHY

The above book by D.M. Turner Ettlinger costs £8.80 in U.K. and is likely to cost at least Shs.200/- in Nairobi. If at least 25 people want the book, the publishers will give us a discount and the price will b about Sh.135/- (Plus postage within E.A.). If you would like the book please place orders with Miss D. Angwin, Box 44486, Nairobi.

Ed.

REPORT ON THE LIBRARY FOR 1975

Sixty eight books have been added to the Library this year. Twenty were purchased by the Society, seven were sent for review and the rest are gifts.

Books sent for review are becoming increasingly important among our accessions. Not only are they important in themselves, but they show the opinion publishers have of our *Bulletin*. The British Museum would not send us a book costing £8 or the Academic Press one costing £36 if they did not value a review in the *Bulletin*. It is not always easy to find reviewers, especially as we cannot follow the usual custom and present the books to them, as of course these are needed for the Library. We are very grateful to members who have helped in this way.

Sometimes I am inclined to feel that books take up more than their share of work and worry. The Library consists mainly of Periodicals. In any scientific library Periodicals are much more important than books. In our Library there are twelve stacks containing books and forty five stacks containing periodicals. Correspondingly the Society spends £50 a year on books and £1000 on producing the *Journal* [illegible] *Bulletin* actually only some 163 of the 1000 copies printed are sent in exchange. If we or the Museum had to subscribe to the various Journals separately the sum required would be enormously greater. The Museum subscribes to one Journal, the Belgian Entomological Journal *Lambillionea*.

Among the gifts, we have a number of children's books given by the family of a succession of Junior Members who are leaving the country. Many or all of these would interest beginners of any age. The Ladybird Book on "Your Body" is full of interest. If borrowed, these books must please be treated with as much care as any of the others. It is almost as bad to allow children to illtreat books as to allow them to illtreat animals. It may not be equally cruel, but it is equally uncivilised. If allowed to illtreat books as children they will not bother to take care of them in later life, and will grow up into the same sort of people as some of our present members.

P.M. Allen, Librarian.

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THE WORLD WILDLIFE FUND PLANT SANCTUARY

The World Wildlife Fund Plant Sanctuary at Mutomo has now been completed and is open to visitors.

The Sanctuary is located on the main Kibwezi - Kitui Road about 70 km from Kibwezi. It has two bandas and is complete with water and toilets, there is an area for camping.

It is a hillside in the semi-arid zone, providing some of the least known and most interesting of plants, over 100 species have been identified and

and listed to date.

Protection for the sanctuary is afforded by two caretakers; to cover the cost of their wages and the upkeep of the bandas a small charge of Shs.2/- a day is made with a camping fee of Shs.8/- or banda fee of Shs.12/- per person per night.

A full description of the Mutomo Plant Sanctuary is given in the Brochure.

The World Wildlife Fund - Kenya, Box 40075, Nairobi, Kenya.

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SOCIETY FUNCTIONS

Monday 12 January 1976 at 5.15 p.m.: at the National Museum Hall, Nairobi. Lecture by Mr C.M. Mburu, Chief Conservator of Forests, Kenya: "Forest Conservation in relation to Land Use and Economic Development in Kenya".

Sunday 25 January 1976: All day visit to Mtaro Estate between Ruiru and Thika by kind invitation of Mr and Mrs F. Hartmann. Please meet Mrs Campbell at the National Museum at 9 a.m., Dr Kokwaro will be in attendance. Bring picnic lunch etc., it is suggested that members share transport.

Monday 9 February 1976 at 5.15p.m.: at the Museum Hall, Nairobi. Lecture by Mr S.G. Strazzeri on "Kosmology".

Saturday/Sunday 21/22 February 1976: Camping visit to Mill Farm, Njoro by kind invitation of Mrs Hindmarsh. Distance from Nairobi approximately 175 km via Nakuru. Campers should be self-contained with all equipment, food and drinking water and be prepared for cold nights. The area is very beautiful, and it is hoped to visit the high altitude forests on the Mau. For further information and directions, please fill in the enclosed slip and return it to Mrs G. Preston, Box 21342, Nairobi, *before* 1st February 1976.

Monday 8 March 1976 at 5.15 p.m.: at the Museum Hall, Nairobi. Annual General Meeting.

Saturday/Sunday 13/14 March 1976: Camping visit to Crescent Island, Naivasha. Details later.

Sunday 25 April 1976: All day visit to Lusiro Estate, Kiambu by kind invitation of Mr J.A. Stevens.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The A.G.M. of the Society will be held in the National Museum Hall, Nairobi on 8 March 1976 at 5.15 p.m.. Nominations for Office Bearers and Members of Committee and notices of matters to be included in the Agenda should be sent to the Secretary, Box 44486, Nairobi before 12 February 1976.

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THE EAST AFRICA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Chairman: J. S. Karmali

Vice Chairman: Mrs J. Hayes

Editor, Jl E. Africa nat. Hist. Soc. Nat. Mus.: Dr P. J. Greenway O.B.E.

Secretary: Mrs D. Collins

Librarian: Miss P. M. Allen

Treasurer: Mrs J. Williams Chandley

Executive Committee (in addition to the above): Miss D. Angwin; G. C. Backhurst (*Ringing Organizer and Editor EANHS Bulletin*); Mrs A. L. Campbell; E. T. Monks; M. P. Clifton; A. Duff-Mackay; Miss J. Donisthorpe.

Co-opted Members: Mrs H. A. Britton (*Nest Record Scheme Organizer*); N. Chumo; Dr J. Kokwaro, J. Maikweki, T. D. Morris; F. Ng'weno; Mrs I. Preston. Miss E. Wangari

The Journal Editorial Sub Committee consists of Dr Greenway, Miss D. Angwin, Mrs V. Balcome, M. P. Clifton, A. D. Forbes-Watson.

MEMBERSHIP

This offers you free entry to the National Museum, Nairobi; free lectures, films, slide shows or discussions every month in Nairobi; field trips and camps led by experienced guides; free use of the joint Society-National Museum Library (postal borrowing is also possible); reciprocal arrangements with the Uganda Society's Library in the Uganda Museum, Kampala; family participation: wives and children of members may attend most Society functions; one copy of the *EANHS Bulletin* every month; a copy of each *Journal* published during your period of membership; the Society controls the ringing of birds in East Africa and welcomes new ringers; the Society runs an active Nest Record Scheme; activities such as plant mapping and game counting are undertaken on a group basis. Membership rates are given at the foot of this page.

JOURNAL

The Society publishes *The Journal of the East Africa Natural History Society and National Museum.* Each issue consists usually of one paper, however, sometimes two or more short papers may be combined to form one number. The aim of this method of presentation is to ensure prompt publication of scientific information; a title page is issued at the end of each year so that the year's papers may be bound together. Contributions, which should be typed in double spacing on one side of the paper, with wide margins, should be sent to the Secretary, Box 44486, Nairobi, Kenya. Authors receive twenty-five reprints of their article free, provided that these are ordered at the time the proofs are returned.

E.A.N.H.S. BULLETIN

This is a duplicated monthly magazine which exists for the rapid publication of short notes, articles, letters and reviews. Contributions, which may be written in clear handwriting or typed, should be sent to the Editor (*EANHS Bulletin*), P.O. Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi, Kenya. Line drawings will be considered if they add to the value of the article, photographs cannot be published.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Life	One payment: K shs.	500/-
Institutional (schools, libraries) .	annual payment: K shs.	50/-
Full	annual payment: K shs.	50/-
Junior (full-time student, no *Journal* supplied) . . .	annual payment: K shs.	10/-

Subscriptions are due 1st January. From 1st July you may join at half the yearly rate and receive publications from that date. Application forms for membership are obtainable from the Secretary, Box 44486. Nairobi.

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BULLETIN

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MAY 10 1976
LIBRARIES

A monthly publication of the East Africa Natural History Society, Box 44486, Nairobi, Kenya. Price 2 shillings

NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Members of the Society (and non-members) are asked to follow these simple instructions when writing articles or letters for submission to the *Bulletin*. The *Bulletin* is presented each month in a duplicated format: the paper size is 20.5×23 cm (10×8 inches), line drawings can be reproduced but the area should not be more than 17.5×23 cm. Lettering on figures should preferably be in 'Letraset', neatly done in Indian ink or left blank: if the last method is followed, the lettering should be indicated on an overlaying sheet and should *not* be done on the figure. Figures should be prepared on good quality white writing paper and not on Bristol Board or other thick material. Whenever plants or animals are mentioned the scientific name should also be given but not in parenthesis. Trinomials should not be used unless there is good reason to do so. Author's names of species are not required.

Contributions may be typed (preferably) or written clearly and should be sent to: G. C. Backhurst, Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi, Kenya. Receipt of contributions will be acknowledged.

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THE FUTURE OF THE *BULLETIN*

The voting slips received so far show that the majority of members are in favour of the *status quo* continuing, that is, no separate quarterly bird bulletin. It seems unlikely that the final count will be markedly different.

At the January Executive Committee meeting the *Bulletin* was discussed at length. It was felt that a change of format (from quarto to A5) and the use of the photolithographic printing method would make the *Bulletin* more attractive to readers and contributors, would allow photographs to be included and might even be cheaper to produce and dispatch. These ideas are sound but I do not think that a change should be made except at the beginning of a year: therefore, four more *Bulletins* will be produced in 1976 and these will be in the familiar duplicated quarto format. The Committee will, during the rest of the year, explore the possibility of having the *Bulletin* produced by photolithography in 1977. At the meeting the Chairman pointed out that there was nevertheless a strong lobby in favour of a separate bird publication. It was felt that, one day, East Africa was likely to have such a bulletin and that it would be undesirable if this bulletin were to be produced outside the Society. I would ask members to continue to think about the separate bird bulletin - the idea is by no means dead.

One of the points put forward by those in favour of a bird bulletin was the inclusion of a records section where records could be listed in a concise way after the style of a typical British county bird report. Now there will no separate *bird* bulletin, at least this year, but I propose to start a 'records section' within the present *Bulletin*. This section will not be restricted to birds and, hopefully, it will encourage those members who at present hold back from submitting records and observations in narrative form to contribute. So, if you have any records of plants and animals, please simply list them and send them in. Please be sure to include numbers, dates and localities. If the organism is rare please supply supporting details. (Those members who have sent in lists of bird records in the past need not resubmit; the observations will be published in due course.)

The next issue (May/June) will be the last one that my wife and I will produce. My job in Kenya finishes at the end of May but, whether I return here or not, I should like to hand over the *Bulletin* to a new Editor. Anyone who would like to take on this job should contact me as soon as possible. Briefly, the job entails corresponding with contributors and, in some cases, with referees; typing the stencils; duplicating 1000 copies six times a year. The collating is done by a band of volunteers. The new Editor should live in or near Nairobi.

Editor.

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SAVI'S WARBLER IN TSAVO, AN ADDITION TO THE KENYA LIST

A Savi's Warbler *Locustella luscinioides* was caught in a mist net at 01.00 hrs on 6th December 1975 in Ngulia Safari Lodge (3.00'S., 38.13'E.), Tsavo National Park (West), Kenya. The bird was ringed, described, photographed and released. Colour prints made from Kodachrome X transparencies will be lodged in the Bird Room of the National Museum, Nairobi.

Three species of *Locustella* winter in Africa but, because of their skulking habits, they remain little known (Dowsett 1972) although now, over 800 of the similar River Warbler *L. fluviatilis* have been ringed while on passage at Ngulia (December 1969 - December 1975). A general account of the autumn movements at Ngulia is given by Pearson & Backhurst (1976).

The Ngulia Savi's Warbler was immediately distinguishable from River Warblers caught at the same time: it was smaller and paler and lacked the yellowish tinge on the throat, head and underparts and the greenish tinge above. These colour differences show well on the transparencies of both species in the hand together. In addition, the bill was finer, especially at the tip, than in the River Warbler and the outer tail feather short-fall was much greater.

The following description was taken (primaries numbered ascendantly): feathers obviously some months old but not much worn. Primaries rather faded but only P2 and P3 very slightly abraded. Retrices little worn but tips castellated indicating a first year bird.

Measurements (in mm): wing (maximum flattened chord) 70; tail 62; tarsus 22; footspan 27; inner footspan 20; bill to feathers 9.5; bill length/width (to/across back of nostril) 11/3.7 (=2.97); width of bill 5.5 mm from tip, 1.4.

Wing formula: no emargination. P2 longest, P3 $-\frac{1}{2}$, P4 $-4\frac{1}{2}$, P5 -7, P6 $-9\frac{1}{2}$, P7 $-11\frac{1}{2}$, P8 $-13\frac{1}{2}$, P9 $-15\frac{1}{2}$, P10 $-17\frac{1}{2}$. P1 1< primary coverts. Tips of secondaries falling $4\frac{1}{2}$ below P10. Outer tail feathers 19< longest pair. Tail length as percentage of wing length, 89. Weight at 01.00 hrs 15.7 g; visible fat rating 3.

Plumage and soft parts: upperparts rather pale warm brown. Below: flanks, under tail coverts and breast buff; chin, throat and centre of belly whitish. Narrow pale tips to under tail coverts. Around eye and faint supercillium whitish. Ear coverts pale brown with slight, darker streaking. We would judge the bird to be of the eastern race *fusca* on account of its rather pale coloration. Tarsi and toes mid brown. Bill dark horn above, pale yellowish horn below, darker towards the tip.

Measurements of the 22 River Warblers caught in the Lodge on the same night (midnight - 04.45 hrs) were as follows:

wing: mean 75.4, range 73 - 79, s.d. 1.59.
weight: mean 15.6, range 14.2 - 17.9, s.d. 0.87.

Dr J.S. Ash (*in litt.*) has very kindly given us his Ethiopian records of Savi's Warbler: his most southerly is from Abiata (7.36'N., 38.40'E.).

This Ngulia record, at 3°S., represents an extension of known range of just over 1000 km.

We should like to thank Mr Janmohamed, Manager of the Lodge, for allowing us to operate at Ngulia and Mr P.M. Olindo and Mr E.C. Goss for permission to ring in Tsavo National Park (West). Grateful thanks also go to Daphne Backhurst for invaluable assistance.

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G.C. Backhurst, Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi.
D.J. Pearson, Department of Biochemistry, Box 30197, Nairobi.

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NEST RECORD SCHEME

Please would contributors send in all records for 1975 (and also any earlier records outstanding).

I must apologise for not putting a notice in the January/February *Bulletin* and would like to thank those members who have sent me their 1975 contributions unprompted.

I have not made an annual report of the Nest Record Scheme since 1971. My husband and Dr Leslie Brown are currently analysing all cards received since the scheme started and are preparing a detailed summary of the information available regarding breeding seasons of the birds in East Africa. Nothing has been published in this field since Moreau's two papers in *Ibis* (1950) on the breeding seasons of African birds. As East Africa straddles the equator, such an analysis is particularly difficult with few species having clear cut breeding seasons. However, many species do show definite egg-laying peaks when there are enough data available. This paper, when published, will show more clearly what the Nest Record Scheme has been able to achieve during the last few years than short annual progress reports. Data are still being added to the analysis and members (whether previous contributors or not) are urged to send in any records available in the immediate future for inclusion in the above work.

During the last few years there has been a considerable fluctuation of contributors. Several of the most energetic members having left East Africa for good and others having lost enthusiasm. However, thanks to a small flow of new contributors and old records copied from notebooks etc. the number of cards received annually has remained at about 1000.

Hazel Britton, Organiser, E.A.N.H.S. Nest Record Scheme, Box 90163, Mombasa.

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PALAEARCTIC PASSERINE MIGRATION AT KARIOBANGI, NAIROBI

Patterns of occurrence of Palaearctic passerines as winter residents or passage migrants have been established in detail only for a few sites in East Africa. In the Nairobi area, where few such species winter in any number, interesting and varied passage movements occur both in autumn and spring. Our knowledge of these has expanded considerably over the last few years, partly due to regular mist-netting at a *Lantana* scrub site at Kariobangi, north-east of the city. The site has now been cleared for cultivation, and this note reports and discusses numbers of migrants caught there from April 1971, when it was first worked, until April 1975 when bush clearing was completed.

The netting area comprised about one hectare of scattered *Lantana* thickets, and other low scrub, situated between the Kariobangi sewage disposal works and the Nairobi River. At migration times, passage migrants were often concentrated in these bushes early in the morning, and warblers, nightingales and shrikes could be quite efficiently caught. Yellow Wagtails *Motacilla flava* were often netted also, but these are caught in much greater numbers within the sewage works, and are not discussed further here.

Sixty to 150 m of mist net were in use each morning the site was worked, from half an hour before, until two to three hours after dawn. Catching was of course influenced not only by the amount of net used, but by wind conditions and other weather factors. For example, birds left thick cover on the river bank and moved about more in the netting area on wet mornings. Nevertheless, daily catches provided some measure of the migrant numbers grounded and moving through the area early each morning. Even in late January and February, Palaearctic birds accounted for approximately 30% of the insectivorous passerines netted, and at times of heavy passage the figure was usually 70 - 80%. From about 10/ha of bush in winter, numbers of migrant warblers rose to over 100/ha at dawn on particularly productive mornings in April.

Table I gives, for each month, total numbers of each migrant caught over the period 1971 to 1975 (retraps as well as ringed birds are included), together with the total number of mornings the site was worked.

The spring movement, commencing at the end of March and continuing into May, is much heavier than the autumn one, which is confined mainly to November. As shown in Table I, the species composition of the two movements is very different; indeed, the appearance of a number of species at Kariobangi has been virtually confined to one season or the other. Thus, the Sprosser *Luscinia luscinia*, Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla* and Marsh Warbler *Acrocephalus palustris* are principally autumn species, whilst the Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio*, Reed Warbler *A. scirpaceus*, Sedge Warbler *A. schoenobaenus*, Great Reed Warbler *A. arundinaceus* and Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus* occur almost entirely in spring. Only the Garden Warbler *S. borin* and the Whitethroat *S. communis* have appeared in some numbers on both passages. A small number of Garden Warblers, Blackcaps, Whitethroats, Reed Warblers and Sedge Warblers have over-wintered each year in the scrub and along the adjacent river valley, with a few Red-tailed Shrikes *L. isabellinus* and Barred Warblers *S. nisoria* in most years, as well as Nightingales *Luscinia megarhynchos* and Iranias *Irania gutturalis* in 1973/74.

TABLE 1. *Monthly netting activity and totals of birds caught at Kariobangi over the period April 1971 - April 1975*

Months	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	My
Netting days	6	28	19	7	9	20	70	14
Red-backed Shrike	-	-	-	-	-	10	42	-
Red-tailed Shrike	-	2	2	2	3	3	1	-
Sprosser	3	27	3	-	-	1	21	-
Nightingale	4	4	2	-	-	2	1	-
Irania	-	-	1	-	2	2	8	-
River Warbler	-	3	-	-	-	-	1	-
Reed Warbler	-	6	5	6	2	13	333	46
Marsh Warbler	-	41	31	-	-	-	5	1
Great Reed Warbler	-	-	2	-	-	3	62	1
Sedge Warbler	-	10	34	1	2	14	257	100
*Olivaceous Warbler	1	-	1	-	-	-	4	-
**Upcher's Warbler	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Barred Warbler	1	4	4	-	3	1	11	-
Garden Warbler	-	18	23	4	12	15	95	-
Blackcap	-	22	10	3	4	2	2	-
Whitethroat	7	16	10	4	2	14	184	-
Willow Warbler	1	4	10	-	1	67	393	15
+Spotted Flycatcher	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-

* *Hippolais pallida*

** *Hippolais languida*

+ *Muscicapa striata.*

The autumn movement begins rather late, for although Swallows *Hirundo rustica*, Yellow Wagtails and a few Wheatears *Oenanthe oenanthe* are back around the sewage works by early October, no warblers are to be found in the scrub. An occasional Willow Warbler, Garden Warbler or Whitethroat has appeared about the middle of the month, but the first marked mixed migrant influxes are usually evident after wet or heavily overcast nights during the last few days of October or the first week of November. Sprossers predominate in these first arrivals, but become scarce later in November. Marsh Warblers, on the other hand, appear a little later, and have been mainly caught from the second week of November to early December. Autumn arrivals have been rather unpredictable, but virtually confined to wet or murky mornings. Falls have seldom occurred later in December, even with apparently suitable weather, but the year 1971 was exceptional. On 19th December, after a day of heavy overcast and steady rain, a large arrival took place which involved primarily Sedge Warblers, a species normally very scarce in autumn, and produced our only autumn Great Reed Warbler records. There is presumably a considerable movement over Nairobi each December, in which these species are involved, which normally goes undetected. The Sedge Warbler and the Great Reed Warbler both winter in large numbers in southern Africa, but although they occur abundantly in East Africa on spring passage they seem surprisingly scarce in Kenya and Uganda in autumn.

The first sign at Kariobangi of the impending spring movement is the appearance of a few Willow Warblers from about the second week of March, but passage does not usually get under way in force until the very end of the month, or the first week of April. The timing of the spring appearances of various species is indicated by Table 2, which gives a breakdown of trapping totals over 1971 - 75 by five day periods. Maximum numbers and variety of migrants have usually occurred between 10th and 25th April. Red-backed Shrikes and Willow Warblers are the first major species to pass through, usually commonest during the first two weeks of April, when a few Sprossers and Iranias have also been caught in some years. Numbers of *Acrocephalus* warblers, by contrast, have tended to peak rather later, with the Sedge Warbler scarce until mid-April, dominating the scene late this month and early in May.

In 1974, spring passage was in evidence at Kariobangi earlier than in other years, with unusually large numbers of Willow Warblers caught between 30th March and 7th April. However, the composition of catches at various stages of this spring was similar to that in other years, and there was no clear evidence that overhead movements occurred generally earlier than normal. Rather, it was assumed that its early stages were revealed by the grounding of birds which in most years continue northward overhead. Although spring warbler arrivals have been generally less dependent on rain and heavy overcast than those of autumn, they have tended to be largest on wet mornings, and heavy rain occurred in 1974 from 31st March, earlier than in the other springs studied.

DISCUSSION

Migrant warblers are generally to be found in greater passage numbers on the eastern than on the western, wooded side of Nairobi, particularly in April. However, the reason for the very large concentrations of passage birds

TABLE 2. *Spring netting activity and totals of the main species caught at Kariobangi, by five-day periods*

	16-20 March	21-25 March	26-31 March	1-5 April	6-10 April	11-15 April	16-20 April	21-25 April	26-30 April	1-5 May	6-10 May	11-15 May	16-20 May
Days of operation	3	3	7	7	8	15	16	11	13	6	5	2	1
Red-backed Shrike	-	-	10	7	5	23	3	4	-	-	-	-	-
Sprosser	-	-	1	5	4	10	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Irania	-	-	1	3	1	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reed Warbler	-	5	4	27	25	84	84	62	51	27	13	5	1
Marsh Warbler	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	2	1	1	-	-	-
Great Reed Warbler	-	1	-	7	6	11	17	13	8	-	-	1	-
Sedge Warbler	3	2	7	9	3	45	56	61	83	56	34	8	2
Barred Warbler	1	-	-	1	-	3	4	1	2	-	-	-	-
Garden Warbler	4	2	5	6	17	31	22	13	6	-	-	-	-
Whitethroat	3	2	8	8	20	82	37	30	7	2	2	-	-
Willow Warbler	1	1	59	69	41	120	90	43	30	12	1	2	-

which have at times occurred at Kariobangi is not clear. It seems doubtful whether the effect has depended on the lights associated with the nearby sewage works, for numbers have not noticeably been influenced by the presence or absence of moonlight. Rather, features of local topography and vegetation have probably been responsible. The Nairobi River valley is narrow at this point and the *Lantana* thickets bordering the river were particulary dense.

Our observations have shown that grounded migrants are regularly to be expected at Kariobangi during November and April/early May, while occasional falls in wet weather have provided evidence of overhead movement during December and at the end of March. Our records should provide indication of times when passage migrants should be looked for elsewhere, not only round Nairobi but in southern Kenya generally. There will be local variations, however. There has been little sign at Kariobangi, for example, of the heavy autumn Willow Warbler movement which is evident from late September at Naivasha and Nakuru (pers. obs.), nor do Kariobangi records reflect the northward movements of this species already well under way in the Rift Valley, and also usually at Athi River, by the third week of March. To judge from our retrap data, and from the relatively lean condition of most birds caught, the majority of Kariobangi spring passage birds have been moving rapidly through. By contrast, other sites near Nairobi where migrants have been caught are apparently used as fattening areas, where arrivals have been less weather dependent than at Kariobangi, and where birds have been found to stay for days putting on weight.

The Nairobi movements, particularly those in autumn, are very different in terms of composition from the migrations which occur through western Kenya and Uganda (P.L. Britton pers. comm.; Pearson 1972), where such species as the Sprosser, Irania and Marsh Warbler are rarely or never recorded. They may be compared, however, with the migrations through Tsavo, 2-300 km to the east. Here, the southward movement is more noticeable and predictable than the spring one (Pearson & Backhurst 1976). It occurs later than the period of peak passage as noted at Kariobangi, however, with maximum falls at Ngulia Lodge lights in late November and early December, and greatest numbers of transit migrants in Tsavo generally about mid or even late December. The species involved are similar to those found at Kariobangi, although Whitethroats predominate more and River Warblers *Locustella fluviatilis* are common, whilst Garden Warblers are rather scarce and Blackcaps and Sedge Warblers practically absent. In spring, occasional migrant influxes in Tsavo are similar in composition to the Nairobi movements except that Marsh Warblers may be quite common, whilst Reed Warblers have yet to be recorded.

The Nairobi spring warbler passage, peaking around mid-April, is more marked and continues later than that through Uganda (Pearson 1972). Such species as the Sedge, Reed, Great Reed and Garden Warblers are still passing through in numbers weeks after most locally wintering birds have departed. These movements, originating presumably in Tanzania or farther south, must involve populations with very late breeding seasons, probably those ultimately bound for northeastern parts of the breeding ranges of the species concerned, in Central Russia.

A number of accounts (e.g. Pearson 1972; Pearson & Backhurst 1976) have emphasised the lateness of the autumn appearance of many Palaearctic passerine species in Kenya and Uganda. At Nairobi, most warblers and the two nightingale species first appear in force early in November, although these birds leave their breeding areas and migrate into tropical Africa during August and September. They must spend some weeks each year in stopover areas in Ethiopia, and then move south at a rather precisely controlled time. Their arrival at Nairobi seems to be little influenced by local conditions. When the short rains are late the first warblers and *Luscinia* spp. still appear on time. On the other hand, wet overcast weather earlier in October does not produce the falls of migrants it would some three weeks later. The extensive observations of J.S. Ash (*in litt.*) have recently confirmed that such species as the Whitethroat, Nightingale, Sprosser, Marsh Warbler, Reed Warbler, Basra Reed Warbler *A. griseldis* and River Warbler are already present in the central Ethiopian highlands by late September, but just how far south are these species to be found at this time? As far as we have been able to ascertain they are absent or practically so from northern as well as southern Kenya as late as mid October. Further details of autumn arrival times and peak passage periods in Kenya, particularly from such northern areas as Lake Turkana and Marsabit, could obviously modify the picture we have at present. Indeed, any Kenya September - December records of Palaearctic warblers, thrushes or shrikes could well be of considerable interest.

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D.J. Pearson, Department of Biochemistry, Box 30197, Nairobi.

G.C. Backhurst, Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi.

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BREEDING OF THE HALF - COLLARED KINGFISHER

ALCEDO SEMITORQUATUS IN KENYA

On 27 October 1974, I discovered a pair of Half-collared Kingfishers breeding on the Kileo River, a spring-fed tributary of the Ruvu River.

The nest site was in a hole in a natural earth bank of the river about ½ km downstream of the river's source at Kitovo Springs and within a swamp rainforest (Kitovo Forest Reserve). The vertical bank was about 4.5 m high and the nest hole approximately 3.7 m above the dry weather flow level. The adults were seen entering and leaving the nest hole individually, catching food and taking it into the nest. I was unable to inspect within the nest chamber but there were obviously young inside the hole. The small size of the food being caught by the adults (*not* fish - probably mayfly nymphs) and the lack of any white staining at the entrance of the nest, which normally occurs due to the accumulation of droppings from the young, suggests that the latter were probably well under half grown.

This is the first breeding record for Kenya.

B.S. Meadows, Box 30521, Nairobi.

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AFRICAN GOSHAWK *ACCIPITER TACHIRO* NESTING AT LANGATA

During late November and early December 1975 we frequently noticed a male and female African Goshawk flying over the garden and in many cases carrying some small bird or mammal. They were also observed several times feeding on flesh of some kind, perched on a branch of a large tree near the house.

About the end of December, a large nest of leaves and sticks was observed about seven metres up in the fork of a tree adjacent to the tree in which the birds had been seen feeding. No young birds were visible at first but a few days later two nestlings were seen. They appeared to be greyish white with faint black blotches. From early January the young birds could be heard calling, particularly in the early morning, and the female Goshawk could be seen feeding them on the nest.

From about mid-January the young Goshawks, which had grown considerably and now had white breasts distinctly blotched with black and dark greyish brown wings and mantles, could be seen sitting on branches above and around the nest. They were still being fed morning and evening by the mother and although it was not possible to ascertain the exact nature of their food it was obviously something fairly large as they had difficulty in dismembering it. However, in view of the fact that the considerable population of Bush Squirrels *Paraxerus ochraceus* were not in evidence during the period December to February but have now re-appeared, it is to be presumed that these formed at least some part of the young Goshawk's diet. One nestling appeared to be less mature than the other but both returned to the nest at night and were brooded by the parent bird.

By 24th January the young birds had begun short flights to neighbouring trees - one even landing on the bird bath - and they commenced sparring with each other like young chickens.

From 1st February the young birds were calling continuously and on one occasion were seen fighting on the nest from which they eventually fell locked together to continue the fight on the ground. The next day tha same thing happened in a tree some way from the nest and one of the young then flew some distance to the next door garden where it was picked up by a dog but eventually rescued unhurt. Both birds were seen in trees some considerable distance from the nest the next day but have not been seen since.

The female Goshawk, however, returned to a branch near the nest for the following three evenings. She called continuously for about twenty minutes and in each case was observed to be carrying food, on one occasion distinctly identifiable as a lizard.

F.M. Edwards, Box 42446, Nairobi.

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SOME NOTES ON *EUPHORBIA* SPP.

It is generally assumed that *Euphorbias* with an acrid latex which can raise blisters on a healthy skin and cause intense irritation on mucous membranes are well protected against browsing animals of all kinds. This may be so with most browsers in normal circumstances, but there are exceptions, probably more than is generally known.

In the early 'forties I often visited the Olorgesailie prehistoric site for botanical collecting; the rhino was quite common then and many times I found in its dung numerous spines of the shrubby succulent *Euphorbia stapfii* Berger, indicating that it formed a regular item of the rhino's diet.

Recently Mr Gilfred Powys planted a healthy 2 m-high seedling of *Euphorbia candelabrum* Kotschy in his rock-garden at Kisima Farm, north of Rumuruti. In the morning he found it eaten down to the ground by baboons which had left only the spines scattered about. Mr Powys' observation is amply confirmed in an article by J.M. Lock published in the *E. Afr. Wildl. J.* 10:73-76 (1972) who states that the candelabrum trees on the south bank of the Kazinga Channel (Uganda), where baboons abound, assume a ragged, mutilated outline due to baboons who feed on the young shoots, in contrast to the densely rounded crowns of the trees on the north bank, where baboons are absent.

My own observations show that many dwarf species, such as *Euphorbia gilletti* Bally & Carter from Somalia produce a densely tufted cushion of short stems arising from a massive rootstock, owing to regular cropping by browsers.

In the small experimental plot for succulents at Olorgesailie this species is getting browsed back completely after every growing period, while other dwarf *Euphorbias* of a similar growthform had not been touched so far. We found that the damage to *E. gillettii* was done by ground-squirrels which - quite recently - have extended their browsing activities to *E. uhligiana* Pax which has a similar habit and is indeed indigenous to the Olorgesailie plains and to the Ngong Hills. There is no doubt that the region in which Olorgesailie is situated has shown a gradual but very marked impoverishment of its general vegetation, due probably to a generally lower rainfall during the last forty years. In this process, the moisture-producing plants are becoming rarer and the seasons in which they are available to the local fauna are shortened and thus, in order to survive, the mammals depending on them must turn to less palatable plant species which they have shunned up to now, in order to survive.

Another case in point, if on a somewhat larger scale, is the wholesale destruction of the baobab trees in Tsavo Park which the elephants now eat down to the ground in order to satisfy their hunger, while hardly more than twenty years ago they did not touch this tree.

Peter R.O. Bally, Box 14084, Nairobi.

OBSERVATIONS ON *ALOE* SPP.

By far the largest *Aloe* in tropical East Africa is *Aloe eminens* Reynolds & Bally of Somalia. It occurs in the hills around Erigavo, such as Daloh, Surud and on the Mait Escarpment as a component of the light dry forests which harbour also one or two species of frankincense trees (*Boswellia*).

I owe my first acquaintance with it to Major Edward F. Peck, at the time Veterinary and Agricultural Officer of British Somaliland: in 1942 he brought a cutting of it to Nairobi for identification. Peck said it grew into a tall, branching tree, 15-20 m high with a sizable bole. With its enormous height and characteristic leaves affinities with the South African giant *Aloe bainesii* and the little-known *A. sabaea* from Arabia were evident, but without adequate flowering and fruiting material a positive identification or a full description were ruled out. Hopefully, I planted the cutting in my garden where it grew satisfactorily, but year after year I watched in vain for its flowers.

Ten years later, while on a trip through Somalia, I saw this *Aloe* flowering in Daloh near Erigavo, where I photographed it and collected specimens. It was obviously distinct from *A. bainesii*, being less symmetrically dichotomous in its branching, having a much laxer inflorescence and smaller leaves.

In 1954 I revisited the locality, accompanied by the late Dr G.W. Reynolds of Aloe-fame. We gathered more sample material for a full description, having verified that it is also distinct from *A. sabaea*. We published it as *Aloe eminens* in *Journ.S.A.Bot.* 24:187 (1958).

Meanwhile my cutting kept growing and branching out but never flowered, and I resigned myself to the conclusion that climate, altitude and soil in Nairobi - so different from conditions in northern Somalia - did not suit this species.

Then, in July-August 1975, fully thirty three years after planting, the top-most branch came into bloom, developing a single, vigorous inflorescence, comparable in every way with those we had seen in Somalia. The plant had by now attained a height of 5 m, the girth at ground level was 0.62 m, and could thus still be considered a juvenile specimen.

Imponderable factors may have contributed to last year's flowering, such as the comparatively dry weather, a superabundance of sun etc. On the other hand, I had never observed juvenile specimens flowering in Somalia, but only mature trees 15 to 20 m in height and with a girth of up to 1.50 m, a size which would give them three or four times the age of my cutting, though this is admittedly pure guesswork; in its own habitat with its hotter, though more arid climate *A. eminens* may reach maturity more quickly.

It will be interesting to watch the behaviour of my cultivated plant in subsequent years: will it flower regularly from now on, year after year, or was last year's flowering a freak? The years to come will show. Suffice it to state that patience and observation over sometimes very long periods often pay unexpected dividends.

It is unfortunate that we have only one single specimen of *Aloe eminens* in cultivation in Kenya, for - *Aloes* said to be self-sterile - we shall not be able to obtain seeds of the pure strain: the capsules formed on my plant will be either unfertile or produce hybrids with one of the many other *Aloes* growing in my garden.

Peter R.O. Bally, Box 14084, Nairobi.

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LOBELIA STRICKLANDIAE - AN INTERESTING INTRODUCTION

I obtained seed of this Lobelia through the R.H.S. Seed Distribution Scheme last year. As I could find no reference to it in my library, I wrote to the Botanist at the R.H.S. Gardens at Wisley for more information.

In reply he said that they could find no reference to it in their library and had referred to Kew for information. *Lobelia stricklandiae* was found on Mrs Strickland's Farm at Penhalonga, Zambia in a valley.

It forms a large rosette of leaves and when it flowers it sends up a spike of purplish-pink flowers to 4 - 6 m high. It is described in *Journal of Botany* 1935, 73:248. It would seem similar in habit to *Lobelia gibberoa* with which we are familiar, although the leaves in the seedling stage are quite different.

The seed germinated readily and I have several plants in pots ready for planting out in the long rains. Anyone who would like to try this plant is welcome to one, on a first come first served basis.

Tom Grumbley, Box 10, Limuru.

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A NOT SO 'EXTINCT' THRUSH ON THE KENYA COAST

On 25th August 1975, I went to collect two friends for an early morning trip to the Jadini Forest, south of Mombasa. As I entered the drive to their house ("Hyder", just before the Leopard Beach Hotel) I disturbed a thrush-like bird, with upper parts uniformly brown and prominent white spots across the wings. When my friends joined me we waited patiently in hiding and were rewarded when the bird returned to eat ants from the leaf-strewn roadway; despite the poorish light and restricted views we all saw two rows of white spots across the wings and noticed the spots on the underparts and dark marks on the sides of the face. When another similar bird appeared, there was a brief squabble and both disappeared into the thick bush and did not return.

Over two hours later, after a disappointing forest walk, we decided to try a last circuit down the "Bonham" drive-way, into the "Coverdale" property and back up their road to the parked car (half-way between the "Jadini" and "Baobab" hotels). On waste ground behind the Coverdale house we found another of these thrushes feeding on the ground. Using trees as cover, we approached to 15 m and now in perfect light conditions obtained a good description.

The upper parts, including the wings and tail were olive brown except between the two lines of white spots across the wings where colouring was brownish black; the sides of the face were light brown with blackish lines running down from the eye and ear coverts; below there were largish black to dark brown spots and blobs on a deep-buff chest, and black spots, smaller and denser, on the pure white abdomen and belly. On leaving the area yet another of this type flew up from the Coverdale road into the undergrowth.

When later checking, nothing could be found in the 'Williams' books but in Mackworth-Praed & Grant the description of the Spotted Ground Thrush *Psophocichla guttata fischeri* (= *Turdus f. fischeri*) appeared to tally with the birds we had observed. In view of the apparent rarity of this bird and the comment that it probably is now extinct we wonder if other Coast bird-watchers have come across this species.

J.H. Burrell, Kangaru School, Box 17, Embu, Kenya.

Mr & Mrs R. Abel, Homa Bay Secondary School, Box 22, Homa Bay, Kenya.

The Spotted Ground Thrush is by no means extinct in Kenya. Ripley & Bond (*Smithsonian Contrib. Zoo.* 111:1-21, 1971) mention five recent specimens from the Sokoke Forest (north of Mombasa) and at least ten have been ringed there (EANHS Ringing Scheme files) but I do not know of any records from the coast south of Mombasa other than the above.

Ed.

SOME KENYA BIRD NOTES

1. ATTEMPTED PIRACY BY TAWNY EAGLES ON AFRICAN HAWK EAGLE

When returning from a visit to Magadi on 27 July 1975, we had just driven by the Nenkuniyia Plain at about 17.30 hrs when we saw a raptor dropping with talons outstretched into the grass near the road. It rose carrying a lumpy looking object, which could have been a small mammal or medium sized bird, and we saw it was an African Hawk Eagle *Hieraaetus spilogaster*. As it climbed it was suddenly swooped at by a larger eagle which pursued it into a tree by the road only a few metres from our car. Both birds alighted in the tree and immediately a third eagle joined them. The attacking eagles were both Tawny Eagles *Aquila rapax*. It was difficult to see exactly what happened in the tree but after a minute or so the African Hawk Eagle flew out without its prey and perched in a tree a little farther along the road. One Tawny Eagle remained in the tree by the car and it was not in possession of the prey; the other flew off and was lost to view behind nearby trees but it did not appear to be carrying anything, so it would seem that the item of prey was lost in the scuffle. The African Hawk Eagle was an immature bird with very little streaking on the breast and some tinges of rufous shading on the underparts.

2. COITION OF VERREAUX'S EAGLES IN NAIROBI NATIONAL PARK

At Leopard Cliffs in Nairobi National Park on 2 August 1975 at about 13.45 hrs, we saw a Verreaux's Eagle *Aquila verreauxii* alight on a horizontal branch of a large euphorbia near the top of a cliff. After about ten minutes a second Verreaux's Eagle flew over and glided down to a perch immediately beside the first bird, which stood up and adopted a more level posture. Then, without any preliminary ceremony, the second bird rose from its perch and alighted on the other bird's back where, with wings flapping slightly, it apparently successfully copulated with it, remaining in position for only a short time - about ten to fifteen seconds. It then flew off to perch on a tree farther along the gorge. A big nest in the top of another large euphorbia, below where the birds had mated, is the nest belonging to this pair, as the female was adding material to it on 14 August 1975.

3. GREY PHASE LITTLE EGRET AT LAKE MAGADI

At Lake Magadi on 27 July 1975 we saw a bird which at first glance appeared to be an unusual kind of heron. It proved to be a grey phase Little Egret *Egretta garzetta* with a white head and upper neck, the remainder of its plumage being a pale smoky grey. Its feet were bright yellow and apart from colouring, it was similar to other Little Egrets which were present.

S.G. Madge, Firway End, George Hill, Crediton, Devon, U.K.

D.K. Richards, Box 41951, Nairobi.

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THE NEW 'RECORDS' SECTION

As I mentioned on p.20 of this issue, in the next *Bulletin* there will be a records section to which all naturalists are invited to contribute. The whole idea behind this section is to make sure that information which would otherwise be 'lost' in peoples' heads or notebooks gets published, so that everyone can benefit. There will have to be some selection in what goes in and what gets left out; if you are knowledable in a certain field you will know which records to send in but, if you are a beginner or a newcomer to East Africa, I would suggest that you do not do too much selection yourself, rather send in too many records than too few. To give a bird example: as mentioned on p.28, our knowledge of *common* Palaearctic passerines over most of East Africa is nil! Many of these birds are described in books as 'winter visitors','migrant from Europe', or, often enough, especially in lists, just the name of the bird is given. Here we have a Society with members scattered all over East Africa and members making safaris to remote areas. Many of these people take notes, photos, collect specimens and make lists - let us get them into print!

A word is required on rarities: first, please do not just send in records of rare things; second, if you *do* observe something rare please supply some supporting details. Please help to make this section a success.

G.C. Backhurst, Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi.

A PRELIMINARY SURVEY OF SOME BUTTERFLIES OF MAKERERE, KAMPALA

While taking a stroll through the Botany Garden in May 1975, I came across a butterfly which I thought was a swallow tail. It had been badly damaged by something, so I took it to the laboratory to try to identify it more fully. I was vary surprised to discover that the butterfly was a Danaidae *Danaus limniace* Cramer, which is often mimicked by the swallowtail *Graphium leonidas* Fabricius. Since then I have been making collections of butterflies from various parts of Makerere and identifying them by making use of the collections of Owen, D.F. and Chanter, D.O. in the Zoology Museum at Makerere, as well as with the help of Williams (1960). The following is a preliminary list of butterflies so far collected and observed:

FAMILY: Papilionidae Swallowtails

Graphium leonidas Fabricius
Papilio dardanus Brown
P. phorcas Cramer
P. zoroastres Druce

Pieridae Whites

Appias sabina Felder
Belenois aurota Fabricius
B. creona Cramer
B. thysa Hopffer
Catopsilia florella Fabricius
Eurema brigitta Cramer
E. desjardinsi Boisduval
E. hecabe Linn.
Leptosia alcesta Cramer
Mylothris poppea Cramer
M. bernice Hewitson
M. sagala Grose-Smith

Danaidae Monarchs

Amauris niavius Linn.
Danaus chrysippus Linn.
D. limniace Cramer

Acraeidae Acraeas

Acraea acerata Hewitson
A. uvui Grose-Smith
A. perenna Doubleday & Hewitson
A. pentapolis Ward
Bematistes macarista

Nymphalidae Nymphalids

Hypolimnas misippus Linn.
Phalanta columbia Cramer
P. phalanta Drury
Precis octavia Cramer
Pseudoacraea kuenouri Dewitz

This id by no means an exhaustive list and in the course of time, more species will be added.

REFERENCE:

Williams, J.G. 1969 *A field guide to the butterflies of Africa.* London : Collins.

J.H. Buruga, Department of Botany,
Box 7062, Kampala, Uganda.

CAPTAIN C. R. S. PITMAN, C. B. E., D. S. O., M. C.

- A PERSONAL TRIBUTE

Although an Obituary notice has already appeared (*EANHS Bull.* 1974:133) I should like to make some personal tribute based upon the relatively short time that I knew him. As a keen amateur herpetologist, I knew of Pitman's name and reputation long before I ever set foot in Africa. It was in 1972, when he was revising his *Guide to the Snakes of Uganda*, that he first contacted me. He had heard about my veterinary work at the Nairobi Snake Park and was anxious to include in his book some information on snake diseases and parasites. A regular correspondence and exchange of literature developed until, when I first met Pitman in July 1973, I was able to feel I was a friend and colleague rather than a mere acquaintance. On my return to Britain in December 1973 I maintained contact with him and visited him on a number of occasions at the British Museum (Natural History) where he worked. His *Guide* completed, he was embarking on a book on the elephant and again I was asked to assist with data on diseases and to "vet" some of his material. We were in close contact over this book when he became ill and three months later came the sad news of his death.

Captain Pitman was one of that dying race of British naturalists, whose intense enthusiasm embraced all fields of natural history. In his case he combined this interest with many years practical experience in game wardening. The breadth of his knowledge never failed to impress me and our correspondence ranged from the ticks of tortoises to the incidence of rabies in Indian elephants!

By far his most impressive trait, however, was his diligence and hard work at an age when most people would have considered themselves well past retirement. Daily he would go to work - to read, to write his book or to revise manuscripts; he was extremely widely read and would pursue references meticulously. He retained his affection for East Africa and kept in close touch with her conservation problems and achievements. In this context, he agreed very willingly to serve as a signatory for the Ionides Memorial Appeal and was of inestimable assistance in launching the Appeal.

Captain Pitman was a man who had lived life to the full and who, to the last, kept an active and enquiring mind combined with great kindness, extreme courtesy and personal self-discipline. All who met him, from teenage herpetologists to retired colonial officers testified to his zest for life and his enthusiasm for all aspects of natural history. Rudyard Kipling wrote - "if you can fill the unforgiving minute, with sixty seconds worth of distance run, Your's is the world and everything that's in it . . . . . .".; these words were unequivocally true of Captain Pitman and wildlife conservation is the poorer for his passing. We extend ou condolences and thoughts to Mrs Pitman at this time.

J.E. Cooper.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

THE IDENTITY OF SMALL PALAEARCTIC GULLS IN EAST AFRICA

The March 1972 *EANHS Bulletin* contains two notes on the occurrence of Black-headed Gulls *Larus ridibundus* in East Africa: 550 at Dar es Salaam, Tanzania between December 1971 and February 1972 (Harvey 1972: 41), and flocks of 20 or 30 on the north Kenya coast in January 1972 (Bruce 1972: 42). Ignoring birds recorded after June 1971, Backhurst, Britton & Mann (1973, *Jl E. Africa nat. Hist. Soc. natn. Mus.* 140: 1-38) were able to list only six Kenya records (one involving three birds) and none from Tanzania. These March 1972 reports of unprecedented numbers of Black-headed Gulls began a controversy which is still unresolved.

Writing in the April 1972 *Bulletin*, Pearson (1972: 67-68) stated that small numbers of the Slender-billed Gull *Larus genei* had appeared inland in Kenya and eastern Uganda during this same period, and he questioned the identity of the coastal birds. A spate of correspondence on this problem followed in later issues of the *Bulletin*, notably Fry & Horne (1972: 138-139), but interest evidently waned despite the frequent occurrence of Black-headed Gulls in several localities in subsequent years.

When discussing the status of gulls in East Africa, Britton & Brown (1974, *Ostrich* 45: 63-82) were able to quote D.J. Pearson (*in litt.*) that he believed he was wrong in questioning Harvey's identification, and that some, at least, of the 1971-72 birds from inland localities had been collected and identified as Black-headed Gulls. Though Britton & Brown did not solicit records of Palaearctic Lari they received a number of records of the Black-headed Gull along with data on other species. These were passed to Pearson to be incorporated in a report which they believed to be under preparation, as they felt that a full report on this remarkable invasion was out of place in a paper in *Ostrich* dealing primarily with the breeding of Ethiopian Lari. In the absence of such a report four years after the first sightings I think it timely to put the record straight.

There is, in my opinion, no entirely satisfactory report of the occurrence of the Slender-billed Gull south of about 15°N., so that any bird claimed from our area in the future should be fully documented and not claimed lightly. Watson (1971, *Bull. Br. Orn. Cl.* 91: 167) reported a Slender-billed Gull at Lake Manyara, Tanzania on 28 March 1971, but the identity of this bird was questioned by Oreel (1975, *Bull. Br. Orn. Cl.* 95: 175-176). The other two records south of 10°N., in Ethiopia (Urban & Brown 1971, *A checklist of the birds of Ethiopia*) and Nigeria (Wallace 1973, *Ibis* 115: 559-571) are bald statements with no supporting details. I am not questioning the identification in either case but feel that further details should go on record in view of the identification difficulties involved.

It is unreasonable to suggest that none of the birds in East Africa in 1971-72 was a Slender-billed Gull, but the onus is on the observer to properly demonstrate that this species was involved. The Black-headed Gull was certainly involved, a conclusion based on specimens and the presence of birds in partial or full nuptial dress, especially in April. I have observed several such individuals on the Kenya coast and at Lake Rudolf, and, viewed alongside birds in more typical dress, they are evidently the same species, with similar proportions, stance, bill etc. Partly as a result of light conditions they appear very different from Black-headed Gulls seen in western Europe, and it is these differences which have caused so much confusion.

There is no reason to suspect that the Slender-billed Gull might visit our area other than as a rare vagrant, so that any small gull seen here is almost certainly a Black-headed Gull or a Grey-headed Gull *Larus cirrocephalus*.

Peter L. Britton, Box 90163, Mombasa.

Sir,

Having read the notes in the *EANHS Bulletin* January/February 1976 on Kenya marine life, I think I should add my record of *Acanthaster planci* to your growing collection. I am identifying only from photographs and one specimen seen in an aquarium, but I am reasonably certain that it was a Crown of Thorns starfish. I saw the starfish on the upper slopes of the edge of the coral shelf immediately below Fort Jesus. I was goggling at high tide, and the thought of starfish did not enter my mind, as they are infrequent on this reef, except for brittle stars. I took the starfish at first for a pink sea anemone. Having realised what it was, I returned at low tide to collect it, by which time it had been joined on its coral knob by three long-spined sea urchins. I recorded the underwater appearance of the specimen by a rough colour sketch, and then attempted to dry out the starfish. Unfortunately I did not get it photographed, as the drying-out was a failure. But the Crown of Thorns left its outlined stained on to the piece of board on which it had lain. It had seventeen arms and was 40 cm in diameter. This was at the end of December 1975. I have not yet seen another in the area.

Caroline Sassoon, Fort Jesus, Box 82412, Mombasa.

Sir,

Although not strictly in your field, I am writing to enquire whether any of your members are interested in joining an astronomical society?

I have been searching for the existence of one in vain and have decided to start one myself. Please contact me if you are interested.

O.C. Barnwell, Kenton College, Box 30017, Nairobi, tel. 43003.

REVIEW

THE CARNIVORES OF WEST AFRICA by D.R. Roesevaar. London: British Museum (Nat. Hist.) 1974. Pp.548. Price £18.50.

This handsome book is a splendid addition to any library. It has 548 pages, many illustrations and weighs nearly 2 kg. The British Museum imprint is a sure guarantee of its reliability, and it is a mine of information about our fauna too, as most of the animals included have a wide range. There are 14 pages of references. (Dr Rosevaar does not call it a bibliography; does this perhaps account for the fact that though on the subject of lions he quotes extensively from Guggisberg, this name does not occur in the list of references?) There is also a useful glossary of terms and a note on vegetation zones. The animals are dealt with in order, beginning with a general introduction, and going on to the various families, subfamilies, genera, species and occasionally subspecies, although the author does not often go as far as that for reasons that he explains at length. The classification followed is in the main that of Simpson (1945). Each animal is dealt with under uniform headings - first a list of its names, then distribution, description, skull, habits and taxonomy, so that the book is very easy to use. There are detailed drawings of skulls and teeth, and eleven coloured plates designed to help distinguish some animals which are very much alike in appearance.

Taxonomy takes up a lot of space, and probably no one who is not a specialist realises the difficulties. For instance, of the Golden Jackal *Canis aureus*, Dr Rosevaar writes 'Workers have thus for over a century been in the position of attempting to equate collectors' specimens with ill-defined taxonomically classical forms', and this kind of remark comes again and again. Evidently much effort is often expended (in vain) to find out to which animal an old description refers. The author tells us that this may be a mere verbal description or a drawing, often made from a verbal description by someone who had never seen the animal. The colours may not have been very accurate to start with and have faded with time. Or there may be an old skin, perhaps with only one leg, or no skull, or a skull with no teeth, and not properly labelled so that no one knows for certain where it came from. The colours may have been reddened by curing with palm oil or obscured by 130 years of London grime. It is at subspecific level that this uncertainty mostly occurs. Authors have been using what are probably only individual differences to establish new subspecies, and this is liable, as Dr Rosevaar says, 'to add more to confusion than it does to clarity'.

The only way to clear up this muddle, our author tells us, would be to collect a full series from all across each animal's range. We might think that the ordinary naturalist might regret this slaughter of animals that on his own showing are getting rarer and rarer and more and more restricted in range, especially as under the heading 'Habits' he has to admit time and time again that nothing is known, and not even the whole range of modern equipment, about which Dr Rosevaar speaks warmly, can help us much in the study of some of the more secretive carnivores. For some animals, for instance the otters, we assume that studies of the European forms will apply to the African, but he emphasises that we cannot be sure. For some species he quotes studies made in semi-captivity as pets, but as he says, many are unsuitable for this by reason of hostile disposition, nocturnal habit or repulsive smells. To put them in cages is to make the study of their normal habits impossible, though if they will breed, length of gestation period etc. can be recorded.

In fact the book is a record of our ignorance as well as of our knowledge, and Dr Rosevaar has truly laid to heart the quotations that he has chosen for his fly-leaf. It is a survey that we must be grateful to him for compiling and to the British Museum for publishing.

P.M. Allen.

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LIBRARY NOTES

UPLAND KENYA WILD FLOWERS by A.D.Q. Agnew. New members should be informed that the Society made a grant of £100 towards the publication of this book, and in return we were able to get copies at a reduced price for sale to our members. We have no more for sale now here, but Mr Gillett of the E.A. Herbarium (behind the National Museum, Nairobi) has copies and anyone wanting one can get it from him, price 136/-.

I wrote in the last issue of the *Bulletin* of the composition of the Library and of the high proportion of periodicals that it contains. Some readers have asked me what interest these are to the ordinary member, and I should like to point out that many of them are indeed of very great interest. A member recently took out several volumes of the *Ibis* one by one, and found all kinds of interesting papers in them. You would not want to read the whole volume of course, but to look through the tables of contents until something catches your eye. The bound volumes of *Natural History* (The Journal of the American Museum of Natural History) would be a good one to start on, or the *Journal of the African Society*.

Journal parts and reprints for sale. We enclosed a new list with the last issue of the *Bulletin*, very kindly typed for us by Mr W.P. Beattie. Further copies of the list may be had from the Librarian. Already we are doing a brisk sale, and all proceeds go of course to the Society and the production of new *Journals*. We are sorry, but in our eagerness to get the list out with the January issue, one or two mistakes were made, and some important papers have been left out. Under the heading Ecology should be added:

G.D. Hale Carpenter - The geographical distribution of animals. *Journal* No.22, 1925. Price 2/-

R.E. Moreau - Mount Kenya: a contribution to the biology and bibliography. *Journal* No.81/82, 1945. Price 5/-

A note is required on Dr V.G.L. van Someren's two series on Birds and Butterflies. Neither series is available complete, but fragments do remain. We do not normally list papers of which less than five copies are available, and members who wish to collect as many as possible of these rare papers should apply to the Librarian as soon as possible. The bird papers as originally produced were intended to make up into two volumes of which

Vol.I had 9 parts and Vol.2, 5 parts. Of Vol.I there is very little left, but of Vol.2, besides part 5, parts 2,3 and 4 could also have been listed as there are a fair number of copies of all these still remaining, price 5/- each. Between them they cover the coursers, pratincoles, plovers and waders. The butterfly papers are in a worse case. Even those listed are now nearly finished, and anyone who wants any of them should apply to the Librarian as soon as possible.

Readers would help the staff of the Library enormously if they would observe the following rules:

1. When borrowing books, be ready to show your member's card.
2. When returning books, see that your borrower's slips are taken out and destroyed.
3. When making any payment, even if only 50 cents for a reprint, ask for a receipt. A great deal of trouble, and I am afraid some loss, has been caused by neglect of this precaution.

P.M. Allen.

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PHOTOGRAPHIC HONOUR FOR OUR CHAIRMAN

John Karmali, our Chairman, has been awarded the Fellowship of the Royal Photographic Society of Great Britain, probably the highest honour available to photographers anywhere in the world. Many congratulations John, from all the members of the E.A.N.H.S.

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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

A final reminder that the Society's A.G.M. will be held at 5.15 p.m. on Monday, 8th March 1976 in the National Museum Hall, Nairobi. Minutes of the 1975 A.G.M. and the accounts are enclosed with this issue.

After the Society business has been concluded, Prof. A.R. Akester of Cambridge University will talk on 'How Birds Breathe'.

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NATURAL HISTORY PHOTOGRAPHY

Members are reminded about the possibility of obtaining this book at a reduced price. The work was reviewed in the *Bulletin* 1975: 99-100 and a notice about the possible discount was on page 16 of the last issue. Please place your order with Miss D. Angwin, Box 44486, Nairobi as soon as possible.

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SOME RECENT PERIODIC LITERATURE AVAILABLE IN THE LIBRARY

Brothers, D.J. 1975 Phylogeny and classification of the Aculeate Hymenoptera, with special reference to Mutillidae. *Univ. Kansas Sci. Bull.* 50: 483-648.

Brown, J.L. 1975 Helpers among Arabian Babblers *Turdoides squamiceps*. *Ibis* 117: 243-244.

Douglas-Hamilton, I. 1975 Bringing up baby. *Animal Kingdom* 78: 23-31.

Eckholm, E.P. 1975 Desertification: a world problem. *Ambio* 4: 137-145.

------------- 1975 The firewood crisis. *Nat. Hist. N.Y.* 84: 6-22.

Edroma, E.L. 1975 Wildlife count in a Uganda National Park. *Oryx* 13: 176-8.

Frazier, J. 1975 Marine turtles of the Western Indian Ocean. *Oryx* 13: 164-75.

Fuchs, W. 1975 Nachweis der Kolbenente in Kenia. *Orn. Beobacht.* 72:205-6.

Graham, E. 1975 People versus intertidal flora. *Koolewong* 4: 8-10.

Houston, D.C. 1975 The moult of the White-backed and Rüppell's Griffon Vultures *Gyps africanus* & *G. rueppellii*. *Ibis* 117: 574-588.

Mundy, P.J. & Cook, A.W. 1975 Observations of the Yellow-billed Oxpecker *Buphagus africanus*, in Northern Nigeria. *Ibis* 117: 504-506.

Patterson, B. 1975 The fossil Aardvarks (Mammalia: Tubulidentata). *Bull. Mus. Comp. Zool.* 147: 185-237.

Pearson, D.J. 1975 The timing of complete moult in the Great Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*. *Ibis* 117: 506-509.

Rapp, A. 1975 Soil erosion and sedimentation in Tanzania and Lesotho. *Ambio* 4: 154-163.

Ricklefs, R.E. 1975 The evolution of co-operative breeding in birds. *Ibis* 117: 131-134.

Skinner, J.D. & Hall-Martin, I.C. 1975 A note on foetal growth of the Giraffe, *Giraffa camelopardalis giraffa*. *J. Zool., Lond.* 177: 73-79.

Smeenk, C. 1974 Comparative ecological studies of some East African birds of prey. *Ardea* 62: 1-97.

Springer, V.C. & Gomon, M.F. 1975 Revision of the Blennid fish genus *Omobranchus* with descriptions of three new species and notes on other species of the tribe Omobranchini. *Smithsonian Contrib. Zool.* No. 177.

Van Goethem, J. 1975 Description of *Pembatoxon insulare* gen. n. sp. n. from Pemba Island. (Mollusca Pulmonata, Urocyclidae). *J. Br. Mus. (Nat. Hist.) Zool.* 28: 207-216.

Van Someren, V.G.L. 1975 Revisional notes on African *Charaxes*, *Palla* and *Euxanthe* (Lepidoptera: Nymphalidae). pt.10. *ibidem* 32: 65-136.

Widstrand, C.G. 1975 The rationale of nomad economy. *Ambio* 4: 146-153.

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HIGH POWER BINOCULARS FOR SALE

One pair of Zenith (Tempest) 20 x 70 binoculars for sale. Mint condition, field of view 2.5 degrees. Contact A.L. Christie, Secretary to the Jockey Club of Kenya, telephone (Nairobi) 66109 or 66351.

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NEW MEMBERS

Full members:

Mr R.A. Adams, Carretera Principal 139, Tamaraceite, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria.
Miss S. Antenen, Box 21679, Nairobi.
Miss J. Beare, St. Julians, Box 48121, Nairobi.
Mr A. Benn, Box 25217, Nairobi.
Mrs A. Benn, Box 25217, Nairobi.
Mr P.E. Beverley, Kianyaga High School, Box 1020, Kianyaga, Kenya.
Marchesa Sieuwke Bisleti, Box 185, Naivasha.
Mrs J.C. Britten, Box 30322, Nairobi.
Mr G. Clasen, Protection Dept., E.A.P.& L., Box 30177, Nairobi.
Miss D. Cobb, c/o Devon Hotel, Box 41123, Nairobi.
Miss C. Crabbie, Box 30465, Nairobi.
Mrs M. Dodd, Limuru Girls' School, P.O. Limuru.
Mrs B. van Drongelen, Bulleys Tanneries, Box 15, Thika.
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Raimund Schulze, Box 30211, Nairobi.
P.M. Wadeyua, Box 26060

SOCIETY FUNCTIONS

Monday, 8th March 1976 at 5.15 p.m.: at the Museum Hall, Nairobi: Annual General Meeting. After the A.G.M. Prof. A.R. Akester of Cambridge University will talk on 'How Birds Breathe'.

Saturday/Sunday 13/14th March 1976: Camping visit to Crescent Island, Naivasha by kind invitation of Mrs Jean Hayes. It is proposed to make it a working weekend with bird and mammal counts and plant studies. Campers should be self-contained with all food, water and equipment. Please meet Mrs Hayes at the main road entrance to the 'Marina' on Saturday 13th at 11 a.m. or at 3 p.m. sharp. The island is a Wildlife Sanctuary and members are asked to be particularly careful with fires and litter. If you intend to come please fill in the enclosed slip and return it to Mrs L. Campbell, Box 14469, Nairobi, before 5th March 1976.

Sunday 25th April 1976: All day visit to Lusiro Estate, Kiambu by kind invitation of Mr J.A. Stevens. Please meet Mr and Mrs Campbell at the National Museum, Nairobi at 9 a.m. sharp. It is suggested that members share transport.

Monday 26th April 1976 at 5.15 p.m.: Mr Richard Leakey will lecture on 'A review of new and recent discoveries in palaeontology in East Africa'. *PLEASE NOTE THE DATE - IT IS ON THE FOURTH MONDAY IN APRIL.*

Saturday/Sunday 15/16th May 1976: Weekend visit to 'Mountain Lodge'. This lodge has been offered at special rates to the Society, as follows: provided there are 55 bookings, adults 110/-, children under the age of 12 35/- for meals, accommodation free provided they bring their own sleeping bags and will sleep together behind the curtain in the foyer on the first floor. Please send your booking as soon as possible on the enclosed slip to Mrs L. Campbell, Box 14469, Nairobi with *payment in full made out to African Tours and Hotels Ltd.*

Wednesday morning bird walks still continue; please meet at the Museum, Nairobi at 8.45 a.m.

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SPECIAL NOTICE FOR TEACHERS

COMMON ACACIAS OF KENYA

Training in the use of keys is of great importance in biological teaching both for its own sake and for the cultivation of exact observation.

A difficulty is that books containing keys are usually too expensive for each student or pair of students to have a copy. It will thus be very welcome news for teachers that the Government Printer has brought out a 2nd edition of Bogdan & Pratt's *Common Acacias of Kenya* at a price of just 2/-. Since Acacias are found throughout Kenya and one tree in flower produces enough material for many students, this booklet is admirably suited to class room work.

J.B. Gillett, E.A. Herbarium, Box 45166, Nairobi.

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SUBSCRIPTIONS

A final reminder has been included with this *Bulletin* to members who have not yet paid their subscriptions. If you have *paid* but still receive a reminder, please inform the Secretary.

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The Society publishes *The Journal of the East Africa Natural History Society and National Museum.* Each issue consists usually of one paper, however, sometimes two or more short papers may be combined to form one number. The aim of this method of presentation is to ensure prompt publication of scientific information; a title page is issued at the end of each year so that the year's papers may be bound together. Contributions, which should be typed in double spacing on one side of the paper, with wide margins, should be sent to the Secretary, Box 44486, Nairobi, Kenya. Authors receive twenty-five reprints of their article free, provided that these are ordered at the time the proofs are returned.

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This is a duplicated monthly magazine which exists for the rapid publication of short notes, articles, letters and reviews. Contributions, which may be written in clear handwriting or typed, should be sent to the Editor (*EANHS Bulletin*), P.O. Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi, Kenya. Line drawings will be considered if they add to the value of the article, photographs cannot be published.

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BULLETIN

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NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Members of the Society (and non-members) are asked to follow these simple instructions when writing articles or letters for submission to the *Bulletin*. The *Bulletin* is presented each month in a duplicated format: the paper size is 20.5×23 cm (10×8 inches), line drawings can be reproduced but the area should not be more than 17.5×23 cm. Lettering on figures should preferably be in 'Letraset', neatly done in Indian ink or left blank: if the last method is followed, the lettering should be indicated on an overlaying sheet and should *not* be done on the figure. Figures should be prepared on good quality white writing paper and not on Bristol Board or other thick material. Whenever plants or animals are mentioned the scientific name should also be given but not in parenthesis. Trinomials should not be used unless there is good reason to do so. Author's names of species are not required.

Contributions may be typed (preferably) or written clearly and should be sent to: G. C. Backhurst, Box 29003, Kabete, Nairobi, Kenya. Receipt of contributions will be acknowledged.

EANHS BULLETIN MAY/JUNE 1976

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A RECORD OF *FALCO DICKINSONI* FROM KENYA

On 30 July 1975, while visiting Amboseli National Park, Kenya, RJH observed a medium-sized, dark looking falcon flying overhead. The bird alighted in a dead tree, where it was observed with 7 X 35 binoculars. It was slatey grey above, with a dark belly grading into a lighter grey breast. The head was dusky white, rather sharply demarcated from the grey breast, and the bird's bill and feet were yellow. Body length was estimated to be about 12 - 13 inches (*c.* 30 cm).

On 2 August 1975, we saw a similar looking bird, presumably the same individual, about 1 - 2 km from the original sighting point. The bird was observed with binoculars and a 15 - 60 X telescope at a range of 40 - 200 m for about 30 minutes as it repeatedly alighted in a dead acacia tree and was flushed. All the previously noted characters were confirmed. In addition it it was noted that the eye was black and that the bill had a black tip. The tail had faint but definite barring, and a whitish rump patch was visible in flight. In flight the tail appeared very slightly forked. The bird was photographed from about 75 m; the photograph has relatively poor resolution, but the falcon shape, dark body and light head are clearly distinguishable. A copy of this photograph has been deposited in the Bird Dept. of the National Museum, Nairobi.

The observations were made on the edge of an open woodland made up of fever trees *Acacia xanthophloea* and *Phoenix* palms with small palms, fever trees, *Sueda minoica* and grasses as principle undergrowth species. It contains scattered water holes and is bordered by heavily grazed open plains. The woodland is located about 3 km SSW of Ol Tukai, between Enkongo Swamp and the National Park tented camp.

The colour pattern is characteristic of Dickinson's Kestrel *Falco dickinsoni* and rules out all other similar species. In particular, the whitish head, and the lack of yellow facial patch or elongated central tail feathers rule out the Grey Kestrel *F. ardosciaceus* and the Sooty Falcon *F. concolor*, the other uniformly grey, medium-sized falcons (Mackworth-Praed & Grant, Williams Field Guide). The habits and habitat, perching in open woodland near water, also match those commonly noted for *F. dicksoni* (Button 1942, White 1945, Brown & Amadon 1968). As *F. dickinsoni* is almost entirely restricted to Tanzania, South West and South central Africa (Brown & Amadon 1968), this sighting in Kenya is of interest. Mackworth-Praed & Grant, Brown & Amadon (1968), Brown (1971), Williams Field Guide and Clancey (1968) list no records of this species in Kenya, so it may represent a new record.

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Button, J. 1942 Notes on the Grey Kestrel *Dissodectes dickinsoni*. *Ostrich* 13:169-72.

Clancey, P.A. 1968 Variation in *Falco dickinsoni* P.L. Sclater, 1864. *Bull. Br. Orn Cl.* 88:120-123.

White, C.M.N. 1945 On the ornithology of the Kaonale-Lunda Province, Northern Rhodesia. II. Systematic list *Ibis* 87:185-216.

Richard J. Horwitz, Committee on Evolutionary Biology,
John Anderson, Department of Biophysics and Theoretical Biology,
University of Chicago, Chicago, Ill. 60637 U.S.A.

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NESTING OF HUNTER'S SUNBIRD

There is apparently only one previous record of the nest of Hunter's Sunbird *Nectarinia hunteri*, that of Serle (*Ibis* 85:75-76) from Garissa in early October 1940.

A nest was started at Voi Safari Lodge, Tsavo National Park East on 22 September 1975. It was attached to an electric flex of a light 60 cm above ground holding a bulb, about 1 m from a side wall and about 1.5 m above the Bar. When complete it was a typical sunbird-type construction of grass, leaves, paper and spider's webs and lined with feathers. The domed nest structure itself was about 12 cm high with attachments to the wire extending about 20 cm above and below. The entrance had a definite 'porch' projecting forwards from the top. It was built entirely by the female.

Two eggs were laid (cf. one by Serle's bird) on 8 and 9 October respectively thus showing a very long period of nest building. The eggs were pale greenish-grey with brown streaks and markings and measured 19 X 13 mm and 19.5 X 13 mm.

The female was seen to be incubating each day up to and including 20 October by the head barman, Wilson Wahome. No male was seen at the nest at any stage but one was seen quite regularly outside nearby. The cause of desertion is unknown but is unlikely to have been caused by direct disturbance as the female appeared quite tame.

In early December 1975 another nest was built on the side of a tree just in front of the lodge, fairly close to that of an Amethyst Sunbird *N. amethystina.* Eggs were certainly laid (the female was seen to incubate) but it was out of reach and no more details could be obtained.

I have eight other records from Tsavo East implying breeding which could not be followed up. All are between late November and February. Five are of females carrying nest-material, one took material to a recently started nest 2 m from the ground on a *Platycelyphium voense* tree, one is of a pair copulating and the last, of two probable fledglings seen on 10 March 1975.

Peter Lack, Box 14, Voi, Kenya.

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GREAT SPOTTED CUCKOO PARASITISING SUPERB STARLING

Mackworth-Praed & Grant say (Vol.I p.505) that the hosts of the Great-spotted Cuckoo *Clamator glandarius* are Crows and Starlings - Pied Crow *Corvus albus*, Dwarf Raven *C. ruficollis edithae* and Cape Rook *C. capensis*, Redwing Starling *Onycognathus morio* and Piapiac *Ptilostomus afer* being mentioned specifically. The record below probably constitutes a new host species for this cuckoo, and from the above list it would appear that they normally parasitise larger species than the present one.

On 29 January 1976 close to Voi Gat, Tsavo East National Park a young, recently fledged, individual of a Great-spotted Cuckoo was soliciting and receiving food from three adult Superb Stalrings *Spreo superbus*. The bird could be found in one or other of two acacia trees almost continuously for six days. A day or two after its first appearance one young starling was also seen in nearby trees and this was being fed by the adult birds. The food included the white flowers of *Ipomaea mombassana*, figs and insects etc., also bread and cheese.

Simon Trevor and Peter Lack,
Box 14, Voi, Kenya.

BIMODAL BREEDING DEMONSTRATED BY COLOUR RINGING AT KAREN

Many indivual birds are suspected of breeding in Kenya in both the long rains, April - July and again in the short rains, October - December. Colour ringed individuals are now providing evidence that this is a fact. A White-starred Bush Robin *Pogonocichla stellata* ringed, red right leg, some four years ago, remains resident in a small area of forest behind the house where it can be readily found. It was seen with young on 3 September 1973; again on 6 May 1974 and 27 August 1974 and nest c/2 on 12 August 1975 (later two fledged).

Reichenow's Weaver *Ploceus baglafecht reichenowi*. In the bamboo in front of the house. Ringed 12 April 1975 red right and blue right, male and female respectively. Nested 12 April and again 8 September 1975. Variable Sunbird *Nectarinia venusta* male ringed red right on 11 April, nested 1 August and again 1 November 1975 in almost the same site, the nests being only a couple of metres apart.

There are several other suspects however but, as some of the individuals are not yet ringed, there is no proof. It is suggested that where there is good food potential for the young, then some individuals will be double-brooded and others will nest at both seasons. It is the food potential that stimulates onset of sexual activity; while this may or may not be coincidental with climatic conditions e.g. rain, it may be directly or indirectly involved in the production of the food potential.

All nests are recorded for the E.A. Nest Record Scheme. Observers are requested please, to report any colour-ringed birds to either Mr Backhurst or the writer.

G.R. Cunningham - van Someren, Box 24947, Karen.

FLAMINGOS IN BURUNDI CENTRAL AFRICA

There have been several comments from observers that the numbers of Flamingos both *Phoenicopterus minor* the Lesser Flamingo and *P. ruber* the Greater, may have decreased in East Africa in recent years. It might be of interest to know of our observations in Burundi.

The only checklist of birds of Burundi was compiled by Dr H. Schouteden in 1966; according to this list flamingos had never been recorded in this region before that date.

On 4 July 1974 ten flamingos (species not identified) were seen flying northwards over Bujumbura. Towards the end of the same month a number of observers recorded several more flying over Lake Tanganyika in the same general northerly direction. By October 100 were noted on the Rusisi plain on a small seasonal pond about 30 km north of Bujumbura. Of these only 10 were Greater Flamingos and they were all immature. Of the Lesser Flamingos approximately one in ten were juvenile.

Several independent observers recorded sightings of the flamingos during 1974, numbers seen at any one time were never more than 120. By the middle of November flamingos were seen moving southwards, and throughout the following months until the middle of March 1975 the largest group diminished to forty individuals. In April 60 were seen flying rather low over Bujumbura after dusk. Towards the end of June numbers at the small pond they had frequented the previous year increased from 7 to approximately 100. On 16 November 300 or more Lesser Flamingos and one Greater were seen together with thousands of migratory waders (including 5 *Phalaropus lobatus* Red-necked Phalarope, which we think is the first record of this species from Central Africa).
The unusually low level of Lake Tanganyika for this time of the year had produced an ideal biotope at the mouth of the Rusisi River, with several small lagoons and plenty of nutrients.

It is of course hoped that conditions will be favourable for breeding although no signs have yet been seen. The main opposing factor seems to be the fluctuating water level, and the continually changing environmental conditions.

Observations made by Yves Gaugris, Peter Browne, John and Carolyn Walton.

REFERENCE:

Schouteden, H. 1966 *La Faune Ornithologique du Burundi*
Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale - Tervuren, Belgique.
Documentation Zoologique No.11.

Carolyn Walton, D.S. 103, Bujumbura, Burundi.

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RECORDS SECTION (BIRDS)

A Records Section was proposed in the last issue (*EANHS Bull.* 1976: 20 and 34) but the response from readers (with one exception) has been poor. I still have some older records from a number of observers which are being sorted out; they will be passed on to the new Editor for inclusion in the next issue.

The list of records published below are all from Peter and Hazel Britton and all relate to observations made in Kenya. *Editor.*

1. SELECTED NON-PASSERINE ETHIOPIAN MIGRANTS; NYANZA AND COAST ONLY

DWARF BITTERN *IXOBRYCHUS STURMII*
Nyanza: excellent views Ukwala, 1 May 71.
Coast: excellent views, seasonal freshwater pool at Kikambala, 20 May 73. Though there are Kenya breeding records these sightings probably refer to birds breeding in the southern tropics.

ABDIM'S STORK *CICONIA ABDIMII*
Nyanza: 1 Nov. 68 - 25 May 69, 9 Nov. 69 - 20 April 70, 24 Oct. 70 - 26 April 71, 30 Oct. 71 - 3 April 72, from 28 Oct. 72. Passage heavy in Nov., often in hundreds, up to 500; more leisurely passage March - May, up to 50, exceptionally 250 on 4 May 69 and 14 March 70, 200 on 24 Jan. 72 is the only flock of more than 20 in Dec. - Feb. Nested once at Yala.
Coast: singles near Ngomeni, 3 March 74, 27 March 76; excellent views settled and in flight.

AFRICAN CRAKE *CREX EGREGIA*
Nyanza: 29 May 69; several records 28 May - 16 July 72, including a nest with eggs on first date.
Coast: 18 July, 15 Aug, 4 Sept. 75.
Jackson (1938) gives very few records of this intra-African migrant which breeds mainly in the southern tropics, Nov. - May.

LESSER MOORHEN *GALLINULA ANGULATA*
Nyanza: 10 June 71 (2); 28 May - 16 July 72 abundant in inundated areas, with up to 15 or 20 together late May - mid June.
Coast: 2 July 73 (4); 11 May - 26 Sept. 75, mainly in May when up to 20 together.

ALLEN'S GALLINULE *PORHYRIO ALLENI*
Nyanza: 31 May 72, also alongside African Crake, Lesser Moorhen and single Lesser Spotted Crake *Porzana pusilla*; 15 Oct. 72.
Coast: small dam at Bamburi, early May - late Nov., once Feb.; 15 or so together and not at all shy, Nov and May; permanent freshwater but birds present when water deepest.

CRAB PLOVER *DROMAS ARDEOLA*
Coast: Mida, 80 or more Aug. - April, few May - July. Manda Mtoto, 350, 19 - 21 Aug. 75. Scarce away from Mida and Lamu, singly or in pairs on Passage 16 Sept. - 11 Nov.; 3 at Sabaki 15 June 75. Local breeding is unlikely despite begging young at Nyali on 22 Oct. 76.

SOOTY GULL *LARUS HEMPRICHII*
Coast: SMALL NUMBERS (fewer than 50) July - Sept, numbers build up rapidly to 550-650 at Nyali roost Nov. - April. In hundreds at Sabaki/Malindi Nov. - April, max. 450 in Feb. 75 and March 76.

NODDY *ANOUS STOLIDUS*
Coast: up to 4, 13 Feb. - 29 Nov.; mainly at Nyali roosting on fish traps but also at Sabaki, Whale Island (Watamu) and Kisite Island; earlier (pre 73) data from Whale Island are not included (see *Ostrich* 1974, 45:63-82).

LITTLE TERN *STERNA ALBIFRONS*
Coast: far more numerous than believed previously (*Ostrich op. cit.*); numbers highly erratic. All months at Sabaki/Malindi, mainly Oct - April, max. Oct. 73 (150), Jan. - Feb. 74 (600), Feb 75 (450), March 75 (3000), April 75 (600), Feb 76 (3000), March 76 (400). Often at Watamu/Mida, exceptionally 320 on beach at Watamu 18 Nov. 73. At Nyali Nov. - April, max. Jan. 74 (170), Jan 75 (200). Scattered records whole length of coast, e.g. 30 at Kisite Island on 4 April 76. Birds seen well in nuptial dress are always *S. a. saundersi.*

BRIDLED TERN *STERNA ANAETHETUS*
Coast: recorded only at Whale Island when nesting 73 and 75, and once at Manda Mtoto on 21 Aug. 75 ([illegible] pre 73 records see *Ostrich op. cit.*).
We hardly ever venture beyond the reef.

LESSER CRESTED TERN *STERNA BENGALENSIS*
Coast: far more numerous than believed previously (*Ostrich op. cit.*); all months but flocks of 30 or more confined to mid Oct - mid July. At Sabaki, 600-700 annual, Dec. - March, max Feb. 74 (1150), March 76 (900). Up to 250 at Nyali, mainly Nov. - April; 600 at Takaungu, 20 Jan. 74; 150 at Kisite Island, 4 April 76.

SWIFT TERN *STERNA BERGII*
Coast: far more than believed previously (*Ostrich op. cit.*). At Sabaki in all months, flocks of over 20 confirmed to Jan. - June; monthly counts of more than 50 birds Feb. 74 (80), March 74 (160), June 74 (96), Feb. 75 (105), May 75 (180), June 75 (120), March 76 (180). South of Malindi/Watamu only three singles, on 7 Nov. 73 (Nyali), 24 March 74 (Nyali), 24 Feb. 75 (Shimo la Tewa).

ROSEATE TERN *STERNA DOUGALLII*
Coast: thousands July - Nov.; in hundreds any month, but hardly at all at Sabaki mid Nov. - July. Bred again at Whale Island 73 and 75.

SOOTY TERN *STERNA FUSCATA*
Coast: Nyali, roosting 7 July 75.
Thousands at Tenewe Islands (Lamu) on 13 July 75 seen from air and no doubt

this species which has bred there in thousands previously. (T. Morgan per PLB).

WHITE-CHEEKED TERN *STERNA REPRESSA*
Coast: few earlier records away from Kiunga nesting grounds (*Ostrich op. cit.*) In all months at Nyali; flocks of fewer than 10, June - Sept, max April 74(70), May 74 (140), Dec. 74 (35), March 76 (300). Erratic at Sabaki, max June 74 (40), May 75 (400), June 75 (1400 on 15 June). Scattered records whole length of coast, e.g. 8 at Kisite Island on 4 April 76.

WHITE-THROATED BEE-EATER *MEROPS ALBICOLLIS*
Nyanza: annual, up to 35, 29 Sept. - 21 Nov., 25 Feb. - 4 March, once 23 Jan.
Coast: annual, up to 40, 3 Nov. - 14 April.

NORTHERN CARMINE BEE-EATER *MEROPS NUBICUS NUBICUS*
Coast: occurs in all months, especially north of Malindi; only scattered individuals mid April - mid July. Numerous Sept. or Oct. to March, roosting in thousands at Mida Creek and Kilifi Creek (not seen by ourselves) and no doubt at Tudor Creek where gathered nearby in hundreds some evenings.

MADAGASCAR BEE-EATER *MEROPS SUPERCILIOSUS SUPERCILIOSUS*
Nyanza: annual, up to 20, 10 May - 22 Sept.
Coast: status not clear; erratic but annual 6 July - 17 Nov. Common at Lamu where hundreds in mangroves Aug 75 and 30 seen on crossing to Lamu Island Aug. 70. At least 500 roosting in large mango tree at Malindi 23 Aug 70.

2. SELECTED RARER PALAEARCTIC NON-PASSERINES FROM AREAS OTHER THAN NYANZA OR COAST

HONEY BUZZARD *PERNIS APIVORUS*
Narosura, Narok District, an adult of the chocolate phase feeding on ground as close as 12 m on 26 Dec 71; full details including tail bars noted.

SOOTY FALCON *FALCO CONCOLOR*
Lake Jipe, an adult perched in tree at 10 m range (from vehicle) on 1 May 74. Larger, heavier and darker with darker legs than the Grey Kestrel *F. ardesiaeus* which all observers are very familiar with in Uganda or western Kenya (and the Grey Kestrel is a western species which does not occur nearer Jipe than extreme western Kenya). (authors & C.F. Mann).

WIGEON *ANAS PENELOPE*
Marsabit at Lake Paradise, 13 on 29 Dec. 75. (authors, J.A.D. Cape & C.F. Mann).

LITTLE RINGED PLOVER *CHARADRIUS DUBIUS*
Lake Kisima, 22 Dec. 74; North Horr, 27 Dec 74. (authors, J.A.D. Cape & C.F. Mann)

TEMMINCK'S STINT *CALIDRIS TEMMINCKII*
Lake Kisima, 22 Dec 74. (authors, J.A.D. Cape & C.F. Mann.)

SPOTTED REDSHANK *TRINGA ERYTHROPUS*
Lake Kisima, 5 on 22 Dec 74, (authors, J.A.D. Cape & C.F. Mann).

BLACK-HEADED GULL *LARUS RIDIBUNDUS*
North Horr, 2 on 27 Dec. 74; Maikona, pan at edge of Chalbi Desert, 12 on 28 Dec. 74; Marsabit. at Lake Paradise, 10 on 29 Dec. 74. (authors J.A.D. Cape & C.F. Mann).

3. PALAEARCTIC SPECIES FROM COAST AND NYANZA
Non-passerines: all species recorded in Nyanza (Sept. 68 - Nov. 72) and Coast (May 73 - April 76) are included, even if previously published.

LITTLE BITTERN *IXOBRYCHUS MINUTUS*
Nyanza: bird of nominate form ringed 21 Nov 69 (*Jl E. Africa nat. Hist. Soc. 140:4.*

GREATER FLAMINGO *PHOENICOPTERUS RUBER*
Coast: Sabaki (max 110, 22 Aug. 74) and Mida Creek (max 44, 12 Oct 75) only, Aug - April. Perhaps of Palaearctic origin, but presence of 3 Lesser Flamingos *P. minor* with 32 *P. ruber* on 7 Jan. 74 suggests a Rift Valley origin.

WHITE STORK *CICONIA CICONIA*
Nyanza: flocks of up to 700 moving north each spring (mid Feb. - early April); 40 flew south, 29 Oct. 70.

SHOVELER *ANAS CLYPEATA*
Nyanza: 31 Oct - 3 Dec. 71 (6), 12 March 72 (2).
Coast: up to 15, Sabaki and Nyali, 13 Dec. 73 - 13 Jan. 74.

PINTAIL *ANAS ACUTA*
Nyanza: Lake Kanyaboli, male 3 Dec 71, pair 12 Feb. 72.
Coast: Sabaki, 16 March 74, 16 Dec 74 (6).

GARGANEY *ANAS QUERQUEDULA*
Nyanza: up to 200, 4 Oct. - 12 March, annual.
Coast: Jilore Lake (now dry) 8 April 72 (2), Sabaki 16 Dec. 74 (8).

TEAL *ANAS CRECCA*
Nyanza: Lake Kanyaboli, immaculate male, 12 Feb. 72.

TUFTED DUCK *AYTHYA FULIGULA*
Coast: Bamburi, small dam, female 15 - 19 Jan. 75. At 20 m range, small diving duck (*Aythya*), yellow eye, suggestion of crest, greyish bill, small area of white at base of bill, undertail coverts mainly brown.

STEPPE EAGLE *AQUILA RAPAX ORIENTALIS*
Nyanza: singles, 5 Oct., 15 Oct., 16 Oct. 71.

BOOTED EAGLE *HIERAAETUS PENNATUS*
Nyanza: Wire Hill (Oyugis), 2 with other migrating raptors on 3 March 72. (pale).
Coast: Shimo la Tewa, 8 Dec. 74 (pale)

STEPPE BUZZARD *BUTEO BUTEO VULPINUS*
Nyanza: annual on passage; up to 52 moving sout-east, 24 Sept - 4 Nov.; up to 40 moving north, 19 Feb. - 4 March

BLACK KITE *MILVUS MIGRANS MIGRANS*
Nyanza: up to 200 moving south in October, often in mixed flocks with *M. m. parasitus.*

EUROPEAN MARSH HARRIER *CIRCUS AERUGINOSUS AERUGINOSUS*
Coast: annual, 8 records, Sabaki and Shimo la Tewa, 13 Dec. - 2 March.

PALLID HARRIER *CIRCUS MACROURUS*
Nyanza: males, 25 Oct 69, 11 Nov. 69, 11 March 72, 12 March 72.
Coast: males, 19 Jan. 74 (Sabaki), 3 March 74 (Kilifi)

OSPREY *PANDION HALIAETUS*
Nyanza: annual, 29 Sept. - 30 March; also 10 July 69.
Coast: annual, 27 Aug. - 12 April, mainly Sabaki/Mida/Watamu.

PEREGRINE *FALCO PEREGRINUS*
Coast: annual, 18 records, 6 Oct - 12 April. Dates and plumage strongly suggests a Palaearctic origin. Twice took small waders.

HOBBY *FALCO SUBBUTEO*
Nyanza: 3 Oct. - 19 Nov. (5 records), 10 - 30 March (5 records).

KESTREL *FALCO TINNUNCULUS*
Nyanza: Lake Kanyaboli, 12 settled 11 Nov. 69, 3 settled 31 Oct. 71. Excellent views. Not Lesser Kestrel *F. naumanni* which is common on higher ground in nearby Trans Nzoia.

WESTERN RED-FOOTED FALCON *FALCO VESPERTINUS*
Nyanza: male, 15 Oct. 72 (see *EANHS Bull.* 1973:94-95).

CASPIAN PLOVER *CHARADRIUS ASIATICUS*
Nyanza: 3 Oct 69, 19 Sept. 70 (12).
Coast: 19 Aug. 73, 27 Aug. 73 (8), 25 Jan. 74 (2), 26 Jan. 74 (6), 26 Jan 75 (14); all January birds in full or nearly full nuptial dress.

LITTLE RINGED PLOVER *CHARADRIUS DUBIUS*
Nyanza: Lake Kanyaboli, 9 Feb. 69 (2), 2 Nov. 69 (5), 24 Jan. 71, 12 Feb. 72.
Coast: Sabaki, 2 Feb 74, 14 Feb. 75; Takaungu, 10 Jan. 74 (5); Bamburi Quarry, 11 - 30 Jan. 74; Vipingo, 7 April 74 (2).

RINGED PLOVER *CHARADRIUS HIATICULA*
Nyanza: annual passage, small numbers, 20 Sept. - 26 Oct., 12 Feb. - 19 March, max 40 at Ahero on 27 Feb. 71.
Coast: up to 80, Aug. - May, few June - July.

GREAT SAND PLOVER *CHARADRIUS LESCHENAULTII*
Coast: in hundreds, Aug. - April, few May - July.

MONGOLIAN SAND PLOVER *CHARADRIUS MONGOLUS*
Coast: in hundreds, mainly Aug. - May, but common in all months, e.g. 150 (none in nuptial dress) on 1 July.

GREY PLOVER *PLUVIALIS SQUATAROLA*
Coast: in hundreds, mainly Aug. - April, few May - July.

OYSTER CATCHER *HAEMATOPUS OSTRALEGUS*
Coast: Manda Mtoto (Lamu), 19 Aug. 75 (17), 21 Aug. 75 (18). (authors and L.H. Brown.

AVOCET *RECURVIROSTRA AVOSETTA*
Nyanza: Lake Kanyaboli, 31 Oct. 71 (6), 3 Dec 71 (2).
Coast: Sabaki, 13 Dec. 73 - 19 Jan. 74 (2). Possibly of Palaearctic origin in these localities.

COMMON SNIPE *GALLINAGO GALLINAGO*
Nyanza: regular 22 Oct. - 28 March; up to 25 on passage Nov. and March.

GREAT SNIPE *GALLINAGO MEDIA*
Nyanza: 21 Nov. 69 (3), 30 Oct.71 (6), 18 Nov. 71, 19 Nov. 71, 21 May 72, 26 Sept. 72.

SANDERLING *CALIDRIS ALBA*
Coast: in hundreds, mainly Aug. - April, but common in all months, e.g. 150 on 1 July. Never seen in nuptial dress.

CURLEW SANDPIPER *CALIDRIS FERRUGINEA*
Nyanza: up to 10, Sept., Oct., March.
Coast: up to 500, mainly Aug. - May, but common in all months, e.g. 150 on 1 July.

LITTLE STINT *CALIDRIS MINUTA*
Nyanza: up to 20, Sept. - April.
Coast: only in dozens away from Sabaki/Mida where often 400, exceptionally 1200 at Sabaki on 3 Nov. 73. Main arrival October, but in all months, e.g. 15 on 29 June.

TEMMINCK'S STINT *CALIDRIS TEMMINCKII*
Nyanza: 10 March 71, 19 March 71.
Coast: Bamburi on small dam, 11 Sept. 74.

BROAD-BILLED SANDPIPER *LIMICOLA FALCINELLUS*
Coast: annual winter visitor to Sabaki (see *EANHS Bull.* 1973:146-147; 1974:112-113 for full details of first sightings); 5 Aug 73 - 12 April 74 (max.38), 12 Aug. 74 - 3 April 75 (max.29), 2 Aug. 75 - 8 April 76 (max.32, seen by D.J.Pearson, 16 Feb).

TURNSTONE *ARENARIA INTERPRES*
Coast: widespread, all months, mainly Aug. - May, rarely in more than dozens.

SPOTTED REDSHANK *TRINGA ERYTHROPUS*
Nyanza: Ahero, 4 Feb. 71; Lake Kanyaboli, 12 March 72.

WOOD SANDPIPER *TRINGA GLAREOLA*
Nyanza: widespread Aug - May; 100 or more at Ahero when ricefields suitably flooded.
Coast: singles, all months except June; 15 at Mida, 20 April 69.

COMMON SANDPIPER *TRINGA HYPOLEUCOS*
Nyanza: widespread, 8 Aug. - 5 April.
Coast: widespread, up to 20, July - April. No records May - June, but arrives early, from 3 July73, 21 July 74, 18 July 75.

GREENSHANK *TRINGA NEBULARIA*
Nyanza: widespread, small numbers, Sept. - April.
Coast: in hundreds, mainly Aug. - May, but common in all months e.g. 100 on 1 July.

GREEN SANDPIPER *TRINGA OCHROPUS*
Nyanza: widespread, Sept - March.
Coast: 6 Jan. 74, 26 Nov. 74, 27 Nov. 74 (3).

MARSH SANDPIPER *TRINGA STAGNATILIS*
Nyanza: up to 60, Sept. - March.
Coast: only once away from Mida/Sabaki, where up to 60 or 70; mainly Aug. to April but in all months, e.g. 30 on 8 June.

TEREK SANDPIPER *TRINGA TEREK*
Nyanza: Ahero, 4 Oct. 69 (though not listed for Uganda by Backhurst & Backhurst (1970) or Forbes-Watson (1971) there are several records in the annual reports of the Uganda Game & Fisheries Dept., 1937, 1951, anon.).
Coast: mainly Aug. - April when up to 30; occasional May - July.

REDSHANK *TRINGA TOTANUS*
Nyanza: Lake Kanyaboli, 30 Jan. 71, 25 Feb. 71, 12 Feb. 72 (2).
Coast: Mida, 10 Dec. 73, 4 Jan. 74, 3 Nov. 74. Probably regular at Mida (seldom visited).

RUFF *PHILOMACHUS PUGNAX*
Nyanza: Aug. - May. mainly on passage 25 Sept. - 2 Nov. (max.500, mainly males, 25 Oct.) and 13 Feb. - 4 May (max.100, mainly males, 5 March.
Coast: Sabaki 5 Aug. 73(2), Manda Mtoto 19 Aug. 75, dam at Bamburi 26 Sept. 75.

BAR-TAILED GODWIT *LIMOSA LAPPONICA*
Coast: up to 5, several localities, 21 Aug. - 4 Jan. Only regular at Mida. (seldom visited).

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT *LIMOSA LIMOSA*
Nyanza: Lake Kanyaboli, 12 - 13 Feb. 72 (6), 12 March 72 (7).

CURLEW *NUMENIUS ARQUATA*
Nyanza: Lake Kanyaboli, 12 March 72 (3).
Coast: all months except June, most records Oct. - Nov., Feb. - April. Generally uncommon (1 - 5) but occurs in dozens at Mida & Lamu; an exceptional flock of 80 at Manda Mtoto (also seen by L.H. Brown) on 19 Aug. 75.

WHIMBREL *NUMENIUS PHAEOPUS*
Nyanza: Lake Kanyaboli, 17 - 31 Oct. 71.
Coast: in hundreds only at Mida and Lamu, mainly Aug. - May but regular June - July; 800 at Manda Mtoto, 21 Aug. 75.

HERRING GULL *LARUS ARGENTATUS*
Coast: regular and increasing at Sabaki/Malindi Fish Market; occasional at Nyali and Kikambala. Up to 5, 3 Nov. 73 - 30 March 74 (see *EANHS Bull.* 1974: 112-113 for full details); up to 9, 2 Dec. 74 - 22 March 75; up to 16, 17 Jan. - 27 March 76 (we were on leave Nov. - Dec. 75).

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL *LARUS FUSCUS*
Nyanza: Lake Victoria, up to 15, Oct. - March.
Coast: regular in all months, but counts of 10 or more confined to October - April, max.62 at Nyali 15 March 76, 45 at Sabaki 2 March 74. Probably increasing in numbers.

GREAT BLACK-HEADED GULL *LARUS ICHTHYAETUS*
Coast: apparently annual at Malindi Fish Market/Sabaki; 19 Jan. - 2 Feb.74 (full description and details in *EANHS Bull.* 1974:51-52), 10 Jan. - 14 Feb. 75 (2), 17 Jan. 76 (3). All birds were in very similar sub-adult plumage.

BLACK-HEADED GULL *LARUS RIDIBUNDUS*
Coast: at Malindi Fish Market/Sabaki all months Sept. 73 - March 76 except July - Aug. 74. Counts of more than 7 confined to periods 26 Dec. 73 - 30 March 74 (max.51 on 2 March), 16 Dec. 74 - 3 April 75 (max.79 on 14 Feb), 14 Feb. - 7 April 76 (max. 26 on 27 Feb.).

At Kilifi Creek (ferry), 22 Dec. 73 - 2 March 74 (max. 28 on 16 Feb), 9 Jan. - 14 Feb. 75 (max.60 on 9 Jan), 14 Feb. - 28 March (a single bird). Annual at Nyali with roosting Sooty Gulls *Larus hemprichii*, 31 Oct. - 1 March (max.6 on 7 Feb. 74). Single birds at Mombasa and Shimo la Tewa in January 74. Birds in full nuptial dress at Sabaki each April, September and October. The pattern of coastal records shows that this species is now an annual visitor to Kenya, with peak numbers in January - February.

CASPIAN TERN *STERNA CASPIA*
Coast: a wintering population of 30 or 40 at Sabaki/Mida/Watamu; 5 Aug 73 - 30 March 74 (max.34 on 13 Dec.), 12 Aug. 74 - 20 April 75 (max.33 on 10 Jan), 21 Sept. 75 - 7 April 76 (max.26 on 14 Feb). Once south of Mida. at Nyali on 21 Jan. 74; 14 at Manda Mtoto on 21 Aug. 75, and no doubt winters at Lamu.

COMMON TERN *STERNA HIRUNDO*
Coast: status uncertain due to possible confusion with Roseate Tern *S. dougallii* and White-cheeked Terns *S. repressa*. Single dead birds at Bamburi

on 2 Dec. 73 and Kisite Island on 4 April 76. Certainly identified at Nyali, 23 Jan. - 25 March 74 (up to 200), 15 Feb. - 18 March 75 (up to 80), March 76 (hundreds).

Birds identified by translucent area in wings, and by size when seen alongside certainly identified *S. repressa* (which is smaller and shorter legged than *S. hirundo*). A few in nuptial dress alongside both *S. dougallii* (few) and *S. repressa* (hundreds) on 28 March 76.

WHITE-WINGED BLACK TERN *STERNA LEUCOPTERA*
Nyanza: widespread in hundreds, 7 Sept. - 31 May, especially abundant April - May.
Coast: Kikambala, 6 at seasonal freshwater, 5 May 73; Sabaki, 50 in heavy rain, 12 April 75; Manda Mtoto, 19 Aug 75; all in partial nuptial dress.

GULL-BILLED TERN *STERNA NILOTICA*
Nyanza: Lake Victoria, up to 6, Oct. - April; annual.
Coast: a wintering population of at least 100 at Sabaki/Mida/Watamu; all months, but mainly mid Aug. - mid April. Moult to nuptial dress early; 20% are fully moulted by end of Feb., 50% by mid March. Not recorded south of Mida. Several Aug. records from Lamu where it no doubt winters.

POMARINE SKUA *STERCORARIUS POMARINUS*
Coast: light adults at Nyali, 7 Dec. 73 (*EANHS Bull.* 1974:4-5) and at Sabaki, 13 March 76 (seen earlier by P. Agland, and full details to appear in *Bulletin*). A dark skua at Shimoni on 14 March 76 was probably this species but was more likely an Arctic Skua *S. parasiticus*. It settled at 80 m range on a marker bouy of the Kisite-Mpunguti Marine National Park. No elongated central tail feathers were noted and it was evidently in heavy body moult. It appeared substantially smaller than the bird at Sabaki the previous day.

EUROPEAN ROLLER *CORACIAS GARRULUS*
Nyanza: 5 Oct. 68; up to 6, 8 - 29 Nov. 69.
Coast: annual in very small numbers mid Nov. - mid April. Spring passage of flocks (up to 40) at inland localities like Garsen, Shimba Hills and Ribe; not noted on the coast.

EUROPEAN BEE-EATER *MEROPS APIASTER*
Nyanza: up to 30, 16 Sept. - 17 April; substantial passage Oct. - Nov., March - April.
Coast: few records, always 10 or more, 21 Feb. 75, 22 Feb. 76, 20 March 76, 3 April 76, 4 April 76; perhaps regular at Shimba Hills (seldom visited).

BLUE-CHEEKED BEE-EATER *MEROPS SUPERCILLIOSUS PERSICUS*
Nyanza: annual, up to 50, 19 Nov - 6 April; flocks of over 20 only in Nov. and mid Feb. - April.
Coast: irregular, up to 30, 15 Nov. - 10 Dec., 3 Feb. - 1 March.

EUROPEAN NIGHTJAR *CAPRIMULGUS EUROPAEUS*
Coast: injured birds examined 9 April 74, 14 April 74.

GREAT SPOTTED CUCKOO *CLAMATOR GLANDARIUS*

Nyanza: 22 March 70 (3), 3 Feb. 71, 13 March 71. Possibly Palaearctic.

LESSER CUCKOO *CUCULUS POLIOCEPHALUS*

Coast: Mida, 13 April 71, three with *C. canorus*

EUROPEAN CUCKOO *CUCULUS CANORUS*

Coast: substantial passage in dozens at Gedi and Mida mid April 71; poor April passage in recent years with up to 5, 7 - 14 April 74, 3 - 12 April 75; also 2 Nov. 74 (5), 3 Nov. 74 (two localities), 15 Oct. 75.

WRYNECK *JYNX TORQUILLA*

Nyanza: 19 Feb. 69 (*Bull. Br. Orn. Club* 89:162-163).

EUROPEAN SWIFT *APUS APUS*

Nyanza: 16 Sept. - 26 Nov., 8 Feb. - 4 April, 24 Jan. Annual in substantial numbers, especially Oct. - Nov. when in hundreds.
Coast: perhaps overlooked; several with *A. melba* on 13 March 76.

ALPINE SWIFT *APUS MELBA*

Nyanza: 18 Jan. 69.
Coast: Arabuko - Sokoke Forest, 3 with *A. apus* on 13 March 76. Perhaps of Palaearctic origin in these localities

Hazel A. Britton & Peter L. Britton, Box 90163, Mombasa.

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COUNTS OF CICONIIFORMES NESTING IN THREE COLONIES NEAR KISUMU - 27 APRIL 1976

KISUMU HERONRY

Numbers of birds in the trees: 156 Yellow-billed Storks *Ibis ibis* (chicks hatched); 153 Black-headed Herons *Ardeola melanocephala*; 227 Sacred Ibis *Threskiornis aethiopica*; 100 Long-tailed Cormorants *Phalacocorax africanus*; 217 Cattle Egrets *Ardeola ibis*; 53 Yellow-billed Egrets *Egretta intermedius*; 31 Great White Egrets *E. alba*; 2 Little Egrets *E. garzetta*; 28 African Spoonbills *Platalea alba*; 18 Open-bill Storks *Anastomus lamelligerus*. Directions from Ahero on Nairobi-Kisumu road; turn left at concrete culvert blocks 450 m past the "8 km to Kisumu" sign. Track to heronry now graded, but murram not laid yet. Very muddy after rain; ½ - ¾ hour walk from main road.

ONGECHE HERONRY

1000 pairs of six species nested here for the first time in August 1975, when the area was flooded by overflow from the Miriu and Nyando Rivers. Some birds now returning; 98 Black-headed Herons, 33 Open-bill Storks, 15 Great White Egrets, 7 African Spoonbills. Directions: 4 km from Ahero towards Kisumu, turn left at New Tarino Hotel. After 1.2 km, turn sharp left off the murram road before a group of houses. The heronry is 550 m down a track to Ongeche School. Accessible by car.

KOLAL IBISERY

353 pairs of Sacred Ibis nested here in 1975. 282 birds were counted on 27 April, and many nests contained young chicks. Directions as for Ongeche, turning left down the West Kano Irrigation road at the New Tarino Hotel. Proceed for 5.5 km and branch right at Nyangande Market; continue for nearly 1.5 km; the Ibisery is 180 m to the left in acacia trees next to houses. Accessible by car.

Jasper Parsons, Box 1971, Kisumu.

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THEY ARE AT IT AGAIN!

Around Christmas time last year, a pair of African Pied Wagtails *Motacilla alba vidua* decided to build a nest in the glove box of our fishing boat *Tern* anchored in front of our plot at Watamu. We were careful not to disturb the nest in any way, and in any case did not use the boat very much at the time. On 16 January 1976 we found two young in the nest and took them fishing with us, leaving early but returning after only two or three hours as the fishing was very poor at the time. On 1 February the young flew very short distances and were hopping about on the floor of the boat, so they went to sea in the fish-well behind a canvas curtain. One flew out and into the sea and was rescued, wet and bedraggled. Next day they were flying properly and were soon away.

We told Hazel and Peter Britton about the wagtails and were strongly ticked off for not having kept better data for Hazel's nest record scheme. So now, armed with cards we will try to do better.

The wagtails were very co-operative, and on 15 March they had 4 eggs in the nest, which had been rebuilt on top of the old one and beautifully lined with strands of coconut fibre and soft seaweed. The eggs were *c.* 13 mm long, pale beige with very small dark brown speckles, more pronounced at the broad end tailing off at the apex. We were fishing for three days in a fishing competition so the eggs went with us, despite protests from the parents, who were always there to greet us with joyful chatter when we arrived home again in the afternoons. We wondered if eight or nine hours away for three days running would affect the eggs, but the weather was very hot. They all hatched out on 22/23 March. Again they came fishing with us with a curtain over the glove box so as to disturb them as little as possible, but after a couple of hours we had to return home as the tweeting in the nest from four of them was getting really desperate. When they were two weeks old they had grown out of the glove box and were hopping around on the floor. One must have fallen overboard though, as we could only find three. Again two fell into the sea while trying to fly between our two boats as they could not get up high enough to get back into the fishing boat, but they did not mind being rescued and soon dried out. Thus they were 15/16 days old when they could fly reasonably well. The plumage of the young birds is similar to their parents apart from the white being pale grey.

Now they are at it again - the nest was completely rebuilt, and on Easter Sunday 18 March, we had our first egg, another on Monday, on Tuesday we had three, and today (21st) the fourth one is there. The monsoon has changed and it is now blowing hard from the south-east, but I hope we will be able to keep the boat anchored in front until they have raised their third family, then they will just have to stop.

As an interesting sideline, we have, in the last few days - 12 April - found two Senegal Plovers *Vanellus lugubris* nests, mere shallow scoops in the sand. Four eggs were laid in both cases; these were about 19 mm long, very broad at one end coming to a sharp apex, light brown with very dark blotches almost covering the eggs and making them camouflage well with the 'cones' off the casuarina tree under which the nests were situated. In the one which we followed very carefully, three eggs were hatched over a period of three days, and after twodays the fourth hatched. The chicks stayed in the nest for only a few hours before joining their parents in the scrub grass just above the beach.

Anne V. Donnelly, Box 420, Malindi, Kenya.

VISIT TO MILL FARM NJORO 21 - 22 FEBRUARY 1976

The forty odd members who drove up from Nairobi, Nandi Hills and the Njoro neighbourhood were very appreciative of the beauties of the surrounding countryside on the slopes of the Mau range, and of the real Kenya hospitality offered by Mrs Hindmarsh. Around the old farmhouse, one of the first to be built in the district, is a level, shaded campsite with extensive views up the Rift Valley and a variety of bird and plant life.

On the Saturday afternoon we walked across the farm seeing many migrant Swallows *Hirundo rustica*, Capped Wheatear *Oenanthe pileata* and Black-winged Plovers *Vanellus melanopterus*, then up into the forest plantations where we saw parties of Green White-eyes *Zosterops senegalensis*, Black Cuckoo-shrike *Campephaga phoenicea* with Montague's Harrier *Circus pygargus* , Steppe Eagles *Aquila rapax*,Steppe Buzzards *Buteo buteo* overhead. After supper and a session round a big camp fire seated on straw bales, we all went into the big sitting room, once used as the Settlers Club and listened to a talk on Kenya bees and honey by Mr Jim Nightingale, who has fifty years experience of bee keeping. Next morning we visited the Mau forest of cedar, podo, olive, greenheart and bamboo. The energetic started early with Mr John Squire who was of great assistance with his knowledge of Mau birds. The rest followed when generous owners of Land and Range Rovers had packed everyone in. It being half term weekend there were eight girls and boys in the party, who had a great time riding in the back of the farm pickup and altogether enjoyed themselves.

We first visited the Nessuit Forest nursey and were instructed in the art of tree growing by the forest officer, we drove on up to about 2700 m and found a picnic site and then wandered in the forest glades, sadly disfigured by charcoal burners who were fortunately absent on their Sunday rest.

Many interesting plants were identified as Mrs Fleur Ng'weno with her knowledge of botany was in the party carrying a copy of the new book *Flowers of Upland Kenya*. Parties of birds in the undergrowth included Black-billed Weavers *Ploceus melanogaster*, Bracken Warblers *Bradypterus cinnamomeus*, Paradise Flycatchers *Terpisphone viridis* and Olive Thrush *Turdus abyssinicus*. On our return we were treated to a cup of tea before starting for home, and I am sure all would like to join in many thanks to Mrs Hindmarsh and her friends for such a well organised, instructive and enjoyable weekend. If a detailed list of birds is required, Mrs Hindmarsh has one.

Mary Bruce and Daphne Curtis.

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RINGING NEWS

1. SCHEDULES: I would like to remind all ringers that their schedules and retrap forms should be sent in to me covering all birds caught up to and including 30 June. It would be *most* helpful if you could prepare a species total list covering all the schedules submitted at any one time; this would save me many hours of work.

If you have ringed any birds which have distinctive Palaearctic and Ethiopian/Malagasy races, please be sure to make some comment in the "Other data" column e.g. if you have ringed a Scops Owl *Otus scops* you can easily determine whether it is one of the Palaearctic races although you will not be able to judge which; in this case, simply write 'Palaearctic' under 'Other data .

If some basic data are the same for all 50 birds on a schedule (e.g. same species, same ringing date; same locality; same age) it is quite permissible to note this in the first line, e.g.

Motacilla flava	30. 10. 75	Kariobangi
Whole schedule	Whole schedule	

this saves using ditto marks or lines, and will save you time.

2. RING PRICES: the latest price list from one of our ring manufacturers shows increases of up to six times on the prices you have to pay the Society now. Our stocks are quite good, but please be warned that when I have to re-order the prices you will have to pay will be very greatly increased.

3. NEW RINGERS: these are still required; the largest East African state has none, by the way. If you are interested in ringing please contact me as soon as possible giving details of your previous ringing experience (if any).

4. RECOVERIES: an encouraging number keep trickling in. Full details will be given in the next East African Bird Ringing Report, but meanwhile a

selection is given below in brief form. All localities are in Kenya.

RUFF *PHILOMACHUS PUGNAX*
Nakuru to Yakutian ASSR, USSR (10 000 km).

WOOD SANDPIPER *TRINGA GLAREOLA*
Bunyala (Busia) to Gor'kii Region, USSR (6400 km).

MARSH SANDPIPER *TRINGA STAGNATILIS*
Nakuru to Transvaal, South Africa (3100 km).

SWALLOW *HIRUNDO RUSTICA*
Nakuru to Iraq (3700 km).
Nakuru to European USSR (5700 km).
Nakuru to Dagestan ASSR, USSR (two recoveries) (4900 km).
Nakuru to Stavropolskii Region, USSR (5000 km).

YELLOW WAGTAIL *MOTACILLA FLAVA*
Kariobangi to Saudi Arabia (3000 km).
Kariobangi to Iran (4500 km).
Kariobangi to Bashkirian ASSR, USSR (6500 km).
Kabete to Saratov Region, USSR (5900 km).
Kabete to Azerbaijan SSR, USSR (4800 km).
near Kiambu to Saratov Region, USSR (5900 km).

PARADISE FLYCATCHER TERPSIPHONE VIRIDIS
Kikuyu to Kabete (9 km).

MARSH WARBLER ACROCEPHALUS PALUSTRIS
Ngulia to eastern Switzerland (6200 km).
Ngulia to Germany (DDR) (6600 km).
Ngulia to southern Malawi (1400 km).

GARDEN WARBLER SYLVIA BORIN
Ngulia to Jordan (3600 km).

GOLDEN-WINGED SUNBIRD NECTARINIA REICHENOWI
Kinangop to Machakos District (100 km).

GOLDEN-BACKED WEAVER PLOCEUS JACKSONI
Kisumu to Kombewa (30 km).

CHESTNUT WEAVER PLOCEUS RUBIGINOSUS
Ngulia to Kitui District (210 km).

Graeme Backhurst, Ringing Organizer, Box 29003, Nairobi.

I apologise that half of the above and the rest of this issue are in italics throughout. The italic head ('golf ball') locking mechanism broke after typing the word 'near' (above) and I am unable to remove it. This Bulletin is being typed on 1st May (public holiday), tomorrow is Sunday so, rather than stop typing now so that the machine can be mended in Nairobi on Monday and further delay the issue of this Bulletin, the rest will be in italic. Ed.

REVIEW

Useful Plants of Malawi by J. Williamson 2nd Edn. obtainable from the Herbarium, University of Malawi, Box 280, Zomba (1975) pp. 337 some 270 illustrations & map, price 2 Kwacha (c. Sh.20/-).

This very moderately priced , attractive book gives so much interesting information not only about the plants, native and introduced, which are useful to the people of Malawi but also about the ways they are used and their value or otherwise that it is certain to be very popular in that country. The first editon was printed three times, in 1955, 1968 and 1972 and this second edition is considerably enlarged and improved. Unfortunately we have nothing in East Africa nearly as good and as the majority of the plants concerned are also found in East Africa this book from Malawi should be made available to every school in East Africa where biology is taught. The main list of plants is very accurate but unfortunately whoever used these names in secondary lists and as captions to illustrations was careless, changing Cocos to Cocus, Trichilia to Trichelia etc. Two figures have been misplaced; that said to be Typha is perhaps an Amaranthus and that said to be Securidaca is Ricinodendron.

J.B. Gillett.

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

I was interested to read the note in the Bulletin entitled a A Preliminary Survey of Some Butterflies of Makerere, Kampala, by J.H. Buruga.

For the information of members, especially those living in Uganda, I should like to point out, that in addition to the Makerere collections, there is in existence a collection of butterflies in the offices of the Uganda Society in Kampala. This collection was started in 1969 by a group of enthusiasts, and was intended to form the nucleus of a national collection. As far as I know there have been no additions to it since August 1971, but on that date there were about 207 different species represented.

M Carswell, Dept. of Surgery, Box 7051, Kampala, Uganda.

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REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

RECORDS: I am compiling a check-list of the birds of Tsavo East National Park and I would be grateful for any records from the Park and its immediate surrounds.

I would request people to send as complete a list as possible of what they saw, and not simply of those birds which they consider unusual.

Records of land-birds and comments on abundance from 10 years ago and more would also be most welcome.

Peter, C. Lack, Box 14, Voi, Kenya.

KINGFISHER RESEARCH: As a co-operator of the Max-Planck-Institute for Behavioral Physiology (M.P.I.V.), W. Germany. I have come to Kenya for a "Comparative Study of the Ecology and the Behaviour of Kingfishers". In this study I use Lake Nakuru National Park as a base but I also intend to include other parts of the country in my investigations.

In order to waste no time with ferreting I herewith would like to ask all readers who know anything about the occurrence of any Kingfishers to write me a short note as soon as possible. I am especially interested in the times and precise localities of their breeding but any other information will be valuable for me too.

H. -U. Reyer, Box 33, Nakuru.

NOTICE

The Kenya Astronomical Society is now in existence and will meet on the first Thursday of every month at Chiromo, in the Large Science Lecture Theatre at 6 p.m. The next meeting will be held on Thursday, 6 May, 1976 and new members will be most welcome. The Society is open to all those interested in astromony and lectures will be held to assist beginners in getting to know their wau around the skies. There will also be field meetings, with telescopes in use, when the full grandeur of the heavens is revealed. You can see Saturn and his rings - just like in the pictures!

For information, write to the Hon. Sec., Kenya Astronomical Society, Box 46687, Nairobi - Tel. Karen 2279.

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SOCIETY FUNCTIONS

Saturday 8 May 1976: Morning walk to study wild flowers at Kalimoni Estate, Ruiru, by kind permission of Kigwa Ltd. Please meet Mrs F. Ng'weno at the National Museum at 8.30 a.m. Please wear walking shoes and bring notebook and pencil.

Monday 10 May 1976 at 5.30 p.m.: Dr Norman Meyers will give a talk on "Threatened Species".

PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF TIME TO 5.30 p.m. AS IT IS FELT THAT MANY MEMBERS ARE UNABLE TO REACH THE MUSEUM IN TIME FOR 5.15 p.m.

Sunday 13 June 1976: Wildflower studies in the Nairobi area, morning only, led by Mrs F. Ng'weno. Please meet at the Museum at 9 a.m.

Monday 14 August 1976 at 5.30 p.m.: Dr A. Agnew, Aberystwyth University, former President of the Society, will give a lecture on 'Plant Geography, Illustrated.

Sunday 27 June 1976: "Dudu"-crawl in the Karura Forest led by Mr M. Clifton. Please meet at the National Museum at 9 a.m. and bring picnic lunch.

Monday 12 July 1976 at 5.30 p.m.: at the Musueum Hall, Dr Hugh Lamprey, former Director of the Serengeti Res. Inst. and now Director of the U.N. Desert Encroachment Project, will give an illustrated lecture on "Plant - Animal Interactions".

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NEW MEMBERS

Life Members:

Mrs Judith Cooper, Box 42693, Nairobi
Dr H. Schone, Botanisches Institut der Rwth Aachen, Alte Maastrichter Str. 30, 51 Aachen, W. Germany.

Full Members:

Pauline Archer, Box 22, Nandi Hills, Kenya.
Mrs L. Billings, Box 30261, Nairobi.
Paul D. Cahill, Box 40612, Nairobi
Mrs R.J.S. Charles, Box 40426, Nairobi.
Mr M.G. Chase, Box 40612, Nairobi.
Jonathan Cope, Box 40584, Nairobi.
Dr A.W. Diamond, Zoology Dept., Box 30197, Nairobi.
Eva Forsberg, Box 20200, Nairobi.
Mr James Gwahaba, c/o Dr D. Pomeroy, Box 43844, Nairobi.
R. Hempel, Box 30372, Nairobi.
Dr Alison K.K. Hillman, Zoology Dept., Box 30197, Nairobi.
Dr E.S. Hillman, Box 30588, Nairobi.
Gloria D. Hirst, Box 30084, Nairobi.
Mrs J.P. Hobson, Box 30161, Nairobi.
Maureen B. Hocken, Box 24959, Nairobi.
Miss A. Horsfall, Nasokol School, Private Bag, Kitale.
Dr K.L.M. Ibrahim, Nat. Agric. Res. Station, Box 450, Kitale.
Mr R.A. Jackson, Box 15514, Nairobi.
Mr P.L. Miller, Dept. of Zoology, South Park Road, Oxford, England.
Mr N.R. Morrell, c/o Box 30194, Nairobi.
Dr M.J. Mutinga, Box 43904, Nairobi.
Mr Natirboff, U.S. Embassy, Box 30137, Nairobi.
Mr M.P. Patel, Box 11438, Nairobi.
Mr R.A. Perrott, c/o Botany Dept., Box 30197, Nairobi.
Mr P.G. Scott, Nyambeni Tea Co., Private Bag, Meru.
Mrs M. Vivian, c/o Dept of Civil Engineering, Box 30197, Nairobi.
Mr R.M. Watson, Box 1, Molo.

Junior Members:

Peter Brett Scott, Nyambeni Tea Co., Private Bag, Meru.
Adam Warren Scott, Nyambeni Tea Co., Private Bag, Meru.

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NATURAL HISTORY PHOTOGRAPHY: only nine members have expressed a wish to obtain this book through the Society. Since an order of 25 copies is necessary for a discount, we cannot order any now. Ed.

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EANHS

BULLETIN

SMITHSONIAN
OCT 22 1976
LIBRARIES

A publication of the East Africa Natural History Society, Box 44486, Nairobi, Kenya. Price 4 shillings

NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Members of the Society (and non-members) are asked to follow these simple instructions when writing articles or letters for submission to the *Bulletin*. The *Bulletin* is presented each month in a duplicated format: the paper size is 20.5×23 cm (10×8 inches), line drawings can be reproduced but the area should not be more than 17.5×23 cm. Lettering on figures should preferably be in 'Letraset', neatly done in Indian ink or left blank: if the last method is followed, the lettering should be indicated on an overlaying sheet and should *not* be done on the figure. Figures should be prepared on good quality white writing paper and not on Bristol Board or other thick material. Whenever plants or animals are mentioned the scientific name should also be given but not in parenthesis. Trinomials should not be used unless there is good reason to do so. Author's names of species are not required.

Contributions may be typed (preferably) or written clearly and should be sent to: M. P. Clifton, Box 44486, Nairobi, Kenya. Receipt of contributions will be acknowledged.

EANHS BULLETIN JULY/AUGUST 1976

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NOTES ON SPITTING BY A RED SPITTING COBRA

NAJA MOSSAMBICA PALLIDA

There are two species of Kenyan snakes that are able to spit venom; the Black necked or Common Spitting Cobra *Naja n. nigricollis* and the Red Spitting Cobra *Naja mossambica pallida*. Spitting is the squirting of venom under high pressure through the venom ducts at the front of the poison glands. In most venomous snakes these ducts emerge at the tip of the fang, but in these two species the duct is at right angles to the front of the fang, enabling the venom to be squirted forwards from the snake's mouth with an action similar to that of a water pistol.

The venom is neurotoxic and is instantly effective if injected into the bloodstream. It has no effect however on the unbroken skin, unless it enters an open cut or the eyes. Spitting appears to be a purely defensive reaction - I have never seen captive cobras use it to secure their prey.

In July 1973 I had a 1m male Red Cobra in my collection which was collected on the western edge of the Tharaka plain, Meru District, Kenya. He was in good health, and had eaten three Ranid frogs a week previously.

Around 9 am. on 18th July, wearing goggles to protect my eyes, I opened the cage to clean it and seized the snake before he had a chance to spit. I removed the snake from the grab, grasping its head with my left hand and lifted him from the cage, coiling his body round my left arm. I rested this arm on the top of the cage, pushed up my goggles and bent forward to lift the water bowl from the cage. In doing so, my unprotected face passed across the snake's line of vision and as I lifted my head he spat directly into my left eye at a range of approximately 30 cm.

I immediately uncoiled the snake from my arm, dropped him into the cage and ran for the nearest tap. Perhaps 10 seconds had elapsed and as yet I did not feel any pain. I ran water into the eye, washing out as much venom as possible. I now started to feel a dull pain and although I kept my face under the tap, the pain increased until after about a minute it was very sharp, similar to the pain of soap in ones eyes.

I washed the eye for another two or three minutes, then stopped. It immediately started to weep copiously while the sharp pain continued, and on examination in the mirror I saw the left side was vividly bloodshot.

I washed the eye for a further five minutes, during which time the pain lessened. After this I discovered my vision was quite blurred, especially at the centre of focus. The eye was still weeping copiously, so fast that some of the blurring of vision may have been due to this.

Further washing did not relieve the pain, so I was satisfied that I had washed out all the venom I could. By now 10 minutes had elapsed. The pain was dull but still noticeable; eye movement and attempts to focus on near objects caused a rapid escalation of pain. I placed a cotton wool bandage over the eye.

After half an hour the weeping had slowed to a steady drip. The eye was extensively bloodshot - the whole of the white area was deep pink, and in the left corner were several bright red bloodspots. The pain was less intense and sharpness of vision had returned.

By 2 pm. the pain was practically gone; five hours after the accident. A slight ache remained, only noticeable when focussing on very near objects or extreme rotation of the eyeball and the weeping had ceased. By next morning it felt completely normal. The bloodshot effect took four to five days to clear up and the bloodspots did not disappear for nearly two weeks.

The salient points of this incident are :

1) I received a full dose of venom at very short range. Most victims of Spitting Cobras receive the blast at several feet and thus get a proportionately lower dose of venom, but
2) I managed to wash out the venom quickly. There is no doubt that if the venom was left for longer more serious effects would occur.

These two points roughly cancel each other out. However, it must be remembered that even though the bulk of the venom had been washed out in 10 seconds, the amount absorbed in that time was enough to cause serious disturbance of vision. If left in for much longer, the venom would probably have caused temporary blindness.

My advice on being spat at by one of these snakes is, if you get venom in the eye, wash it out as quickly as possible with large quantities of water. Incidentally, there is little or no value attached to the use of such remedies as milk or potassium permanganate and one should not waste time looking for these.

Stephen Spawls,
Flat 26F, Lowdon Court,
Richardson Road, Newcastle
upon Tyne, NE2 4BN, England.

BREEDING COLONIES OF THE PINK-BACKED PELICAN IN UGANDA

The breeding colony of Pink-backed Pelicans *Pelecanus rufescens* in Rwenzori National Park, western Uganda, has been known for many years, and described in some detail by Din & Eltringham (1974). These authors mention a second colony at Rwenshama, which is also in Rwenzori National Park. A third colony is mentioned in the Records of the Uganda Game Department for 1947. A colony in Kabalega Falls National Park was reported by Roger Wheatear, who was Chief Warden there at one time. I located three further colonies in various parts of the country (see Table). Of those known to have been in use in 1970 or since, the total nesting population comes to some 600-860 pairs. This is a minimum figure, since the search for colonies was not systematic.

With the exception of Nakakono, all of the colonies in the Table were shared with Marabou Storks *Leptoptilos crumeniferus*. Pelicans begin breeding two or three months earlier than Marabous, but as breeding occupies more than six months for each species there is a considerable overlap (see Din & Eltringham 1974, Table 1).

In the Kamulikwezi colony (see Table, note (d)) the birds were nesting on *Euphorbia dawei* trees, of which there were about 1200. Only half of these were suitable for nesting, the remainder being too small or with no side branches capable of supporting a nest. About a fifth of the trees were used by Pelicans, which often built three or four nests in the same tree (Din & Eltringham 1974). The Marabous occupied about two-fifths of the 600 usable trees, with an average of 1.4 nests per tree. A random sample of 20 of these trees being used by Marabous included three with Pelicans' nests too. If the choice of trees by Marabous was independent of the prior existence of a Pelican's nest, then about one-tenth would be expected to be shared. This is close to the observed figure; the sample was small but it seems that the association of the two species is not strongly influenced by any interactions between them, either positive or negative. Similarly in other colonies where both species were present, some trees were shared but not others.

The colonies in Kabalega Falls National Park and at Nakitoma, Pallisa and Nakakono were all built in Mvule trees, *Chlorophora excelsa*.

REFERENCES:

Din, N.A. & Eltringham, S.K. 1974. Breeding of the Pink-backed Pelican *Pelecanus rufescens* in Rwenzori National Park, Uganda. *Ibis* 116: 477-493.

D.E. Pomeroy, Department of
Zoology, Kenyatta University
College, Box 43844, Nairobi.

Name of colony	District	UTM Grid reference	Years reported	Number of nests	References
Kabalega Falls National Park	North Bunyoro	UT 44[a]	1969; 1972	50-100	R. Wheater (pers com); note (b)
Ruimi River	Toro	TR (24)[c]	1947	?	Game Dept. Reports
Rwenzori National Park	Toro	(Note(d))	1967-70	450-500	Din & Eltringham (1974)
Rwenshama	North Kigezi	RK 1255	"Many years"	Up to 100	Din & Eltringham (1974)
Nakitoma	Bulemezi[e]	VS 0168	1972	60-80	Note (b)
Nakakono	Bulemezi	VS 4001	1971	20-50	Note (b)
Pallisa	Bukedi	WS 8031	1971	20-30	Note (b)

Notes:
- a colony extends over several kilometres
- b personal observations by the author
- c Locality not given but deduced from circumstancial evidence
- d Colony originally located (since 1939) at Kamulikwezi, G.R. SR 1916; moved to Chalanga River (=Kasazu), G.R. SR 8917 in 1971, but later returned (Din & Eltringham 1974)
- e formerly East Mengo

A HARD TIME FOR SYKES MONKEY TROOP

At Karen, Kenya almost drought conditions have prevailed over the past six months in our small patch of forest, severely restricting the normal food supply for a troop of 11 Sykes Monkeys *Cercopithecus mitis ablogularis*. This has led in the past three months to the animals being forced to find substitutes for their normal food.

All fruiting trees have been stripped and there was little succulent foliage. The troop maintained their normal round in the forest until February when they were forced to find new areas. They often visited the rather open garden and the 'shamba' where there are few trees and even went down into the *Euclea* scrub in the valley at the tail end of the dam.

A few very hard, unripe peaches were tried, only a single bite was taken and the fruit then discarded. They searched diligently for the small grape-like fruits of the creeper *Cyphostemma maranguense* which are normally eaten by birds. Three species of wild cucumbers were eaten: the large green and red, white spotted fruits of *Momordica friesiorum* and the orange fruited *Coccinia trilobata* which is full of seeds covered with a juicy red pulp. The monkeys also ate the small orange fruits of the creeper *Zehneria scabra*, and so competed again with the birds. As the fruitbats also take the first two mentioned cucumbers, the monkeys competed directly with them over this food as they did with the rather hollow, unappertising green fruits of the feral creeper, *Passiflora eichlerana* which the bats have distributed widely.

A few green fruits of the E.A. Greenheart *Warburgia ugandensis* were wastefully eaten, being discarded after a single bite, possibly due to the heavy infestation of fruit fly maggots. By taking these they competed with the Greater or Thick-tailed Galago, *Galago crassicaudata* which is very partial to them. The fallen fruits were surprisingly taken by the Giant Forest Rat *Cricetomys gambianus* which normally subsists on the hard seeds of *Croton megalocarpus*.

Some monkeys were tempted to climb into the very spiky bushes of *Oncoba spinosa* to test their extremely hard, cricket-ball sized yellow fruits, but these defeated them, so they ate the flowers.

One of the most extraordinary items which they relied upon, and visited twice a day, were the stems of the succulent creeper, a cactus, *Cereus* sp.indet. which smothers some of the trees at the forest edge. The stems are three-flanged and the monkeys have taken bites deep enough to reach the cortex. Judging by the tooth and jaw marks, all ages of monkeys fed on this substance. For monkeys to bite is unusual, as generally all food is picked up in the fingers, momentarily sniffed and then placed in the mouth. They also took all the 22-30 cm flower buds, and open flowers of *Cereus*, taking a few mouthfulls and discarding the rest. Other unusual items were the flowers of *Eucalyptus saligna* and the Silky Oak, *Grevillia robusta*, possibly as these contain very sweet nectar, thus competing with birds.

The parasitic *Loranthus* clumps, particularly *Viscum* sp. were searched for the small sticky yellow-orange fruits, thus depriving Barbets and other birds of this food supply. In the forest we found that many orchids, *Aerangis* sp. and *Rangeris* sp. had been damaged, the tips being pulled off, while near the house an *Aerangis* was in full bloom and one spray was found well away from the plant; we can only assume this damage was caused by the Sykes.

One monkey was seem to climb into the big exotic bamboo in front of the house and we thought that it was unlikely to find much there. We were wrong, for a nest of a Streaky Seed-eater *Serinus striolatus* fell to the ground which contained two crushed eggs, probably sucked! We had suspected monkey activity in the bamboo for the Hartlaub's Turaco *Tauracus hartlaubi*, and the Red-eyed Dove *Streptopelia semitorquata* had lost their eggs and/or young in rather peculiar circumstances.

An activity we had never seen before, and which intrigued us was the evening gathering in the rough grass just outside the forest beside the house. Here the Sykes were working in the soil and we found that they were after termites. They scratched the earthen runways to find the workers and soldiers, picked these up in their fingers and popped them into their mouths. They examined termite-run covered twigs carefully, brushing the mud off to get at the insects. This involved a great deal of labour for little reward but they worked for half an hour at a time over several evenings. All ages except babies took part in this activity.

Now that we have had some rain the monkeys have been spending a great deal of time on the ground searching for the white mushrooms growing on the nest debris thrown out by termites. We have found evidence that they were taken, and I know that they are edible as my Buganda cook introduced me to them many years ago.

To help the troop out we occasionally provided them with a mass of discarded fruits, kindly given by our greengrocer. Apples, pears, avacado, pawpaw and eventually rather squishy melons were much enjoyed.

The troop has become reasonably 'tame' in our presence, and that of the large dog which has virtually given up the unequal chance of catching one of them, and so its barking has subsided. They often climb on to the roof of the garage and out houses and we have seen them walk the electric wire from the pole to my lab. which is supported by a length of ordinary fencing wire. They walk along with great agility, swaying their tails to maintain balance.

The monkeys are led by an old male who we suspect was once a pet as he is quite fearless and would often sit just out of dog-jump reach. He had now gathered a small troop of three adult females, two of which are carrying small young, and others of various ages. Alas, the troop of 14 apparently raided a neighbour's garden, probably for tomatoes, and the owner must have shot three.

G.R. Cunningham van Someren,
P.O. Box 24947, Nairobi, Kenya.

SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE FORESTS SOUTH OF MOMBASA

Most of us know the merits of the Sokoke/Arabuko Forest and tend to go north to look for birds when at the coast rather than to the smaller areas of forest along the coast to the south. I feel that the latter are underestimated and tend to be neglected, so I would like to draw attention to them before they disappear. They do not boast Clarke's Weaver Ploceus golandi or the Sokoke Scops Owl Otus ireneae, but most of the other coastal forest bird specialities do occur, some of them are easier to see here, and the forests do have a few specialities of their own.

I have seen two species which indicate a link between these forests and the mountain forests of Tanzania - the Green-headed Oriole Oriolus chlorocephalus and the Uluguru Violet-backed Sunbird Anthreptes neglectus. The Oriole, which I believe has also been seen in the Shimba Hills, is not too difficult to see, and, as juveniles are sometimes present, probably breeds here. I have only seen a pair of the Sunbirds once. The female was quite distinctive, lacking the white supercilium of the Kenya Violet-backed Sunbird A. orientalis, with some metallic blue on the upperparts and extensive yellow on the belly. Elsewhere in Kenya, they occur in the Taita Hills and the Tana River forests.

The forests south of Mombasa tend to have a medium canopy of fairly tall trees, a well developed zone of tall shrubs and very little in the way of a herb layer. It is perhaps because of this lack that ground feeding birds are more easily seen here. I have seen five Orange Ground Thrushes Turdus fischeri here in two days, Red-tailed Ant Thrush Neocossyphus rufus and African Pittas

Pitta angolensis are more easily seen. It was in a small patch of this type of forest I found my one and only Sokoke Pipit *Anthus sokokensis* - on the forest floor.

Three years ago, the usual degredation to subsistance agriculture had started here, but due to the creditable efforts of concerned local people this has been stopped. Perhaps more interest by naturalists in this area will help to maintain this situation.

John Squire,
P.O. Box 40, Njoro, Kenya.

A VISIT TO MUTOMO

Mutomo Plant Sanctuary, half way between Kibwezi and Kitui, is not sufficiently known. It is a charming place, one of the gneiss inselbergs of the eastern Ukambanis, kept in an undisturbed state. The climate is delightful and there is something for everybody. The plants, of course, are outstanding and we noticed particularly *Barleria* sp., *Ruttya fruiticosa*, *Hypoestes verticillaris*, the red flowered *Aloe ukambensis* on the top of the ridge, and *Acacia mellifera* in tree form. The undisturbed vegetation is thronged with birds, eagles soar over the high crags, and the mornings ring with the songs of the Spotted Morning Warbler, *Cichladusa guttata*, Robin Chats *Cossypha* sp. and the Nicator *Nicator chloris*. Besides these, the mountain provides a wonderful variety of walks and scrambles in lovely surroundings with immense views. A junior member of our party said he would gladly have stayed there for a week.

The establishment of this sanctuary has meant much work and thought. The enthusiasm of our fellow members, Dr Bally and Mr Classen provided the driving force, Kitui County Council to whom the land belongs were convinced of its value and set it aside and look after it, while the World Wildlife Fund gave a grant towards the establishment of the rest camp. This consists of two bandas built of concrete blocks with smooth concrete floors and beautiful thatched roofs. They are joined by a wide verandah and there is a separate kitchen and wash room. They are unfurnished, but it is easy to set up one's own camp furniture in such a convenient place. There is a long shelf on the verandah and even hooks on the doors.

The whole area however is chronically short of water and seems likely to remain so for the rest of this geological era. Water is pumped, when the pump works, from a hole in the dry bed of the Tiva river about 16 km away. There was about 15cm in the big tank on the rocks which the local people were dipping out with a tin on the end of a rope. We were told that we could also get water from the Administration Office down the road, but visitors would be well advised to take as much as they can. In view of these difficulties it is unfortunate that those who planned this otherwise excellant camp should have paid lip service to civilization by installing the machinery of water-borne sanitation. Of course it has no chance to work and we thought it best to leave the closet unvisited. The camp is therefore without any sanitary arrangements of any kind, and we all know what squalor this will lead to if more than a very few visitors go there.

However in spite of, or perhaps just because of, these difficulties, what Mutomo needs is more visitors. The sanctuary has been set aside for the enjoyment of naturalists, and it is up to us to do our part by going there, so please put Mutomo at the top of your list for places to visit. The journey is just over 100 km whichever way you go. Perhaps the most interesting one is via Machakos to Kitui. Ukambani is pleasant enough to drive through at this time of the year, when every remaining stick of vegetation has put forth leaves and the ground is covered with flowers. However, a new road is being cut from Machakos to Kitui and is at the moment in a very unpleasant stage as far as Makutano. A fast driver would probably find it quicker to go down the main Mombasa road to Kibwezi and then turn left on the Kitui road, a pleasant run of about 80 km across the Athi river and through the Yatta Gap. It could of course be made part of a longer trip by going via Machakos and Kitui, and then to Kibwezi (with possibly a stop at Bushwackers or in Kibwezi Forest) and so on to Tsavo or the coast.

If there were more visitors the County Council would feel that their gesture in setting up the sanctuary was appreciated by naturalists and those in charge would have more inducement to keep it in good order and to work out a practical routine for entry and departure. At present arrivals are evidently something of an event and one must be prepared for delays. The charges are Shs. 2/- entrance and Shs. 12/- per person per night whether you use the bandas or camp in your own tent.

Miss P.M. Allen,
P.O. Box 14166, Nairobi, Kenya.

SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE SPOTTED EAGLE OWL

BUBO AFRICANUS

This story really begins on 15th October 1974 when broken tiles were being replaced on the roof of the two storey house we live in on Migaa Estate, Kiambu, Kenya. On enquiring about progress from the upper landing window, the fundi said 'What do you want to do about "hiyo kitu"'? Naturally I enquired 'What"kitu"' and he pointed to the gutter right under my nose where I recognised an Owl which was obviously one of a pair which had been around the garden for some weeks.

Shortly afterwards the bird flew off to a neighbouring flowering gum, revealing three eggs rather like table-tennis balls. They were lying in a corner formed by two vertical walls at right angles and a short tiled roof sloping down to one of these two. A down pipe from a higher gutter discharged about 30 cm from the end of this valley. No nesting material of any description was present. The bird returned and obviously decided to put up with the proximity of humans, one of whom was within 4.7 m of her, in full view for most of that day.

Two days later I noticed that one egg had a small puncture - not sufficient to break the inner skin. Presumably this was caused by a claw during a hurried departure. The hen (it is assumed that it was her) sat very tight and appeared to accept faces peering at her out of the window, so we thought that the hatching date must be close.

We went on leave from 20th October to 3rd November, returning to find two chicks and no sign of the third egg. One chick was active and was covered with a greyish white down. This one was twice the size of the other who was still blind.

Now a most interesting period began in watching the progress and up bringing of this family. I summarise my observations below.

1) OLD BIRDS

a) Markings The cock is perhaps slightly more distinctly marked than the hen, and his 'ears' are marginally more pronounced. Only the hen has a bright yellow iris. The cock's eyes are more greyish brown with only a faint suggestion of yellow.

b) Nesting Habits As far as we could determine, it is the hen who exclusively incubates and broods the young. The cock remains in a vantage position during daylight and guards against danger. He became very jealous after the young had flown and attacked both of us at dusk one evening when near the young, but only with our backs towards him.

2) CHICKS

a) Food Impossible to be certain, but no evidence of regurgitated food being fed to them. The old birds frequented the front porch after dark to collect insects under the security light. Sausage flies, various beetles, moths etc. were presumably collected. Both chicks readily consumed all these by hand feeding.

Other items of diet seen were :
1) small bird, possibly Pigeon) all within the first two weeks
2) rat) of November
3) old birds will readily take raw beef from us and immediately feed it to the young, but they refuse cooked meat.
4) other small birds, sunbirds, robin chat to judge from the odd feathers
5) bat
6) hedgehog

b) Movement I suspect a considerable difference between the two and attribute this to the larger being a hen and the other a cock bird. The hen chick made nightly walks around the roof on 16th November, it fell off the roof on 19th November and was rescued from the dog on the porch at about 8.30 am. Noticed it was able to fly on 26th November, that is at perhaps 5-6 weeks old. It flew off to a nearby tree on 6th December, at an age of 7 weeks, but returned each evening to the nest site, presumably for our offering of a dog meat supper. The small youngster left the roof on 20th December which would be again about 7 weeks old. Only for two or three days previously had it been leaving the nest site. The other had been far more venturesome prior to taking its first flight.

c) Education Despite our interference in the normal natural way, the two chicks did not become addicted to chopped raw beef, but gradually became less easily attracted to us and could be seen each evening attempting to catch insects in the grass. The old birds were bringing them food for a period of almost a month within the vicinity of the nest.

After this all Owls disappeared and have not been seen, but a neighbour has been complaining of thumps on his roof, hoots at night and overturned rain gauges, so presumably another centre has been chosen for the next brood - about eight months later.

Roger E. Cockett,
Migaa Estate, P.O. Box 255,
Kiambu, Kenya.

RECORDS SECTION

Since taking over the Editorship of the Bulletin from Mr Backhurst, several members have asked me if I plan to continue this section on the lines of that published in the last issue of the magazine. My feeling is that the bird records should be published, but I do not feel that the Bulletin is the right place to do this. It has been suggested to the Ornithological Sub Committee that they use a Journal issue for the records, and this will be discussed by the sub committee members shortly.

This section will now consist of records of all plants and animals either found out of their normal range or which are of such rarity that the speedy publication of them is important. Records of mass migrations will also be considered. All the bird records which I have received and which are more suitable for the Journal will be handed over to the Ornithological Sub Committee.

M.P. Clifton, Editor

PLANTS The following are additions to ranges recorded by A.D.Q. Agnew in 'Upland Kenya Wild Flowers'

Felicia muricata Compositae Kajiado District M. Clifton Coll. 71 May 1976

Bulbine abyssinica Liliaceae Kajiado District M. Clifton Coll. 20 May 1976

INSECTS

Belenois aurota Brown-veined White. Seen in large quantities (about 500 crossing road per km.) from about 15 km east of Mackinnon Road almost to Voi with isolated specimens up to Kiboko. Flying slightly west of south. 20.6.1976 M. Clifton

BIRDS

Gypaetus barbatus Lammergeyer 1 25.8.1974 Mt Kulal, Hazel Britton. 2 6.2.1972 Kimilili Track, Mt. Elgon, Hazel Britton.

Aquila heliaca Imperial Eagle 1 seen and photographed, 20.1.1970 near Olduvai Gorge, Tanzania. L.H. Brown agreed with identification from photo. Believed to be the first record for Tanzania. D.A. Turner

Elanus riocourii Swallow-tailed Kite 3 13.9.1975 Masai Mara Game Reserve Mrs R. Daniell. 2 28.4.1976 near Mogotio on Nakuru/Maragat road, Cunningham van Someren (see Dept. of Ornithology Newsletter No 1 p. 4)

Burhinus oedicnemus European Stone Curlew 1 21.1.1971 Serengeti on burnt ground believed to be the first record from Tanzania. D.A. Turner. 6 21.3.1969, near Moroto (near Kenya/Uganda border) D.A. Turner.

Jynx torquilla Wryneck 1 11.2.1976 Gof Redo, Marsabit A.D. Forbes-Watson. 1 12.2.72 L. Nakuru D.J. Pearson. 1 (the same?) 10.4.1972 L. Nakuru, netted, very fat, wt. 49g D.J. Pearson. There appears to be only one previous published record for Kenya (Britton & Harper (1969), *Bull Br. Orn. Club* 89: 162-165)

Pitta angolensis African Pitta On Thursday, 27th May 1976 at 6.30 a.m. I disturbed a mixed group of birds on the area of tarmac to the side of Kenton College school buildings, Nairobi. Among this group was an African Pitta. As the birds flew away the Pitta flew into a window and was killed. (see Dept. of Ornithology Newsletter No 2, p. 3 for more information)

Motacilla alba White Wagtail A palaearctic bird, 23.1.1969, L. Manyara, believed to be the first record for Tanzania D.A. Turner. 1 21.1.1974 Marsabit D.A. Turner

Ficedula hypoleuca or *albicollis* Pied or Collared Flycatcher 1 Lavington garden, Nairobi 14-18.10.1974 believed immature *albicollis*. The bird was mouse-brown in colour with much darker, almost blackish-brown wings and tail. A white wing bar most distinct as were the pure white outermost tail feathers. Iris dark brown, bill and feet blackish. Fed daily on insects taken either on or close to the ground or in small *Acacia* tree. Possibly this species is a bird of more open country compared to *F. hypoleuca* so far recorded only from western forest localities. Certainly the area around Iringa where Lynes (1934) found it fairly common is very comparable to that of Nairobi D.A. Turner. 2 31.10.1974, forest canopy, Kakamega D.A. Turner

Hippolais olivetorum Olive Tree Warbler 1 ringed, 12.4.1976, Watamu D.J. Pearson

Phylloscopus collybita Chiff Chaff 1 singing, 29.1. 1972 L. Nakuru D.J. Pearson, 1 singing, another seen, 23.2.1976, Cobb Farm, Mau Narok G. Pelchen

Turdus pelios African Thrush 1, 26.9.1975 L. Nakuru Mrs R. Daniell

MAMMALS

Poecilogale albinucha Striped Weasel (see p. 84)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

My husband and I are having an eight month holiday at Kurwitu, 40 km north of Mombasa. Twenty months ago, from January to March, 1973, we spent three months here and it is interesting to compare the notes I made of the shells, fish and reef life then, with my current observations. I wondered if other coast members have noticed similar changes, not for the better, and if so I hope they will write to you.

In 1973 the Crown of Thorns Starfish *Acanthaster planci* was a rarity here. During the daily swimming, goggling and looking trips we saw only three; now I see them on four out of five visits to the reef. Is the Fisheries Department interested in this kind of information ? Should or should one not bring them above the high tide mark and leave them to die ? I realise that by chopping them up a few hundred extra develop, but apart from leaving them in the sun, how else can one kill them ?

Nearly every day three men comb the coral heads for ornamental coral fish. Even the humble Black and White Clown Fish are being taken - I should think nearly half of the sea anemones no longer have fish and I can only assume they have been taken. In 1973 *Pterois*, Lion, Turkey or Feather Fish were frequent, so far I have only seen one this time; the Moorish Idol *Zanclus canescens* and the Pennant Fish *Heniochus acuminatus* have become very uncommon. This is to name only the more striking. Cannot anything be done to control the over hunting of the ornamental coral fish ? Surely there should be a closed season for breeding and very stiff licenses which are only issued for definite export or educational purposes. It seems to me to be the ideal opportunity to bring in controls and limitations to discourage people from hunting and exporting. Also the number of fish caught should be investigated and compared with the number which are ALIVE three months later. I am sure the wastage must be considerable as the little plastic bags, buckets etc. cannot be the best way to ensure undamaged fish.

Despite all the over shelling, there are still, if you look carefully, numerous Cowries on the reef and in the coral heads; I have seen 25 species. (As I am not collecting I feel 'seen' is more accurate than 'found'). These are also breeding. In one day I saw the Caurica Cowrie *Cypraea caurica dracaena*, the Kitten Cowrie *C. felina* on eggs, the Fimbriated Cowrie *C. fimbriata*, both breeding and non-breeding Lynx Cowries *C. lynx*, the Tiger Cowrie *C. tigris*, the Isabella Cowrie *C. isabella*, the Honey Cowrie *C. helvola* and of course the Gold-ring Cowrie *C. annulus*.

The fishermen are finding numerous Mole Cowries C. talpa - many largely immature and some truly superb Tortoise Cowries C. testudinaria ingens. The arabica group are quite common including the Humpback Cowrie C. mauritiana. Specimens of the Pacific Deer Cowrie C. vitellus dama and the Carnelian Cowrie C. carneola have been either very small or very large with perfect markings. There are still astonishingly large numbers of Red Helmet Shells Cypraecassis rufa but these are being collected in quantity (I met a fisherman with two dozen, mostly immature) and so must be shelled out very soon. Most of the shells you see on sale at the hotels are not fully adult - cannot it be made an offence to sell an immature shell ? The Giant Spider Conch Lambis truncata is going the same way, frequently they have not begun to form their projections on the outer lips. Mitres and Cones do not seem to attract the tourist, and being far harder to clean quickly and successfully, seem to be left alone.

I realise that my records may not be relevant over the Coast in general, but I have found it interesting, although depressing, to compare the life on a small part of the reef which we visit daily, as we did in 1973. Apart from over cropping, how much of the decline in marine life can be blamed on encroachment of the sand onto the reef and the apparent increase of dead and dying coral ?

Christine Marsh,
P.O. Box 80377, Mombasa,
Kenya.

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Sir,

SIGHTING OF STRIPED WEASEL

In December 1975 I went with the Natural History Society to Saiwa Swamp, Kitale, Kenya. At about 5.30 one evening Helen Dostrup and I were walking near the look-out tree at the edge of the swamp with Professor Skinner when we saw a small, brown and white striped mammal run down the side of the tree and into the long grass.

From the brief glimpse which we had of it, it appeared to be a squirrel-like animal about 45 cm long, including tail. The body had horizontal brown and white stripes and the tail, which was carried out behind him, was brown and bushy.

We told Professor Skinner and searched for it in the long grass without success. Later we described the animal to Mr Barnley, the local game warden, and he told us to look up the

Libyan Striped Weasel Poecilictis libyca in our 'Field Guide to the Larger Mammals of Africa'. This we did but the features did not correspond, the Libyan weasel being black and white as opposed to brown and white, and its tail white instead of brown. Later Mr Barnley said that it was probably a Striped Weasel Poecilogale albinucha.

In Nairobi Mrs Preston and Mr Clifton arranged for me to see a Zorilla Ictonyx striatus and a Striped Weasel at the Museum. The mammal which we had seen was identified as a Striped Weasel.

This sighting caused great interest as the Striped Weasel is seldom seen, and this is the first record from the Saiwa Swamp area.

Suzie Weeks (Junior Member)
P.O. Box 19031, Nairobi, Kenya.

GREAT SPOTTED CUCKOO PARASITISING HILDEBRANDT'S STARLING

Further to the note in the May/June Bulletin (p. 50) by Simon Trevor and Peter Lack on the Great Spotted Cuckoo Clamator glandarius parasitising Superb Starling Spreo superbus, I have a similar record of it parasitising Hildebrandt's Starling S. hildebrandti.

On 3rd and 4th June 1975 two newly fledged Great Spotted Cuckoos were observed being fed by an adult Hildebrandt's Starling in the Ndutu area of the south-eastern Serengeti, Tanzania.

It is also interesting to note that Hildebrandt's Starlings are hole nesting birds, whereas Superb Starlings are not. Also Hildebrandt's Starling is an East African endemic confined to Kenya and Tanzania.

With two young being fed by an adult, it would indicate that more than one egg is laid in the host's nest, as is, I believe, the case with many European birds.

Miss A.A. Geertsema,
Praamgracht 3, Soestdijk,
Holland.

NOTICES

Members of the Society may wish to know that a new Regional Museum has opened in Kenya. Located in Meru municipality on the north eastern slopes of Mt. Kenya, the Meru Museum was officially opened on 7th May 1976 by the Assistant Minister of Housing and Social Services, Mr Paul Rurumban, acting for the Minister, Mr Taaita Toweett, M.P.

The Museum is located in the old D.C.'s office (built of stone in 1917) and contains three exhibition rooms. One room is devoted to the natural history of the area, another deals with the cultural history of the region and a third is set aside for temporary exhibits. At present there is a series of historical photographs in the third room.

Natural history exhibits feature woods of Kenya and birds, mammals and insects of Meru. In the Museum grounds there are three traditional Meru huts and a cultivated area has examples of local crops. A fish pond and a large free-wandering pet tortoise complete a live animal exhibit.

The Meru Museum, which is the second Regional Museum to open within a year (Museum of Western Kenya in Kitale opened in June, 1975), is a culmination of efforts in a cooperative venture by the Municipal Council of Meru, the County Council of Meru, and the National Museums Board of Trustees. Mr George Kirigia is the Curator.

Stephen Schmidt
Regional Museums Development
and Coordination Officer,
P.O. Box 40658, Nairobi, Kenya.

4th PAN-AFRICAN ORNITHOLOGICAL CONGRESS

With participation for the forthcoming 4th Pan-African Ornithological Congress in Seychelles, 6th - 13th November 1976, now approaching the three hundred mark, I would ask all members who are still hoping to attend and who have not as yet registered to contact me as soon as possible in order to avoid the disappointment of being placed on a waiting list.

D.A. Turner,
Organizing-Secretary, 4th PAOC,
P.O. Box 48019, Nairobi, Kenya
Telephone 48772.

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

Palaearctic passerine birds are mainly observed in Kenya as passage migrants, either between October and early January on their way to southern Africa, or from late March to early May on their way north. Many species however, have considerable wintering populations here, and are to be found commonly between January and early March in suitable habitats. Surprisingly little is known regarding the wintering distribution, abundance and habitat preference of, for example, the Palaearctic warblers and nightingales. I am attempting to gather available information on Palaearctic visitors to Kenya and Uganda, both the less common and the supposedly common species, in order to describe not only migration movements but details of wintering. I would be most grateful to hear of any records of passerine migrants, particularly warblers, nightingales and allied species during winter. 'Winter' is probably best taken as the period from January to early March (Uganda and western Kenya) or from late January to early March (eastern Kenya), for a southward movement continues up to, and even beyond, the new year in some areas.

Any records of concentrations of these species on passage would be of great interest, but it is the 'wintering' period about which least information seems to exist. For example, even in the cases of such supposedly common wintering birds as the Whitethroat _Sylvia communis_ and the Barred Warbler _Sylvia nisoria_, information is almost non-existent from well visited areas. If anyone is interested in looking for migrants whilst birding during the 'Palaearctic season', I should be glad to suggest localities and habitats which might prove fruitful.

David Pearson
Dept. of Biochemistry,
P.O. Box 30197, Nairobi, Kenya.

SOCIETY NOTICES

New Editor

Please note that Mr M.P. Clifton has taken over from Mr Backhurst as Editor of the _Bulletin_. All contributions, which should be typed or in clear hand writing, should be sent to him at P.O. Box 44486, Nairobi. All articles will be considered, particularly notes of general natural history interest, so it is up to you members to submit the type of material you would like to read in the _Bulletin_. Finally, sincere thanks go to Mr and Mrs Backhurst for the wonderful job they have done over the years.

Upland Kenya Wild Flowers

The Society still has a few copies of Dr Andrew Angew's book for sale. If you would like to purchase a copy of this excellent work, please write to The Treasurer, Miss Angwin, P.O. Box 44486, Nairobi. Members may purchase this book at a reduced rate of Shs. 136/-.

Nakuru, the Lake of a Million Flamingos

Local members will receive with this Bulletin a prospectus for this book by Charles A. Vaucher. This is the English edition which has just been published.

Members of the Society are being offered this book at a reduced rate of Shs. 50/-. Please place your orders with the Treasurer, Miss Angwin, P.O. Box 44486, Nairobi. Please note that if you order it from any other source, the price will be the original Shs. 60/-. Postal orders through the Society will be accepted, but please add on Shs. 6/- for packing and postage.

Car Stickers

Have you bought your car stickers yet ? The Society has a large stock of these very attractive stickers, obtainable from the Society's office (see below) for just Shs 2/- each ! These are also on sale at most Society functions.

New Offices

In a couple of weeks time, the Society will be in their new office, so do come and visit us. All Journal reprints and memberships will be dealt with there. To get to the office, go through the swing door opposite the Library (in the Museum) turn right and first left, Room 4.

Back copies of the Bulletin

Most back copies of the Bulletin are available from the Secretary at Shs. 2/- each. Any member who is leaving the country and does not require old Bulletins and Journals should return them to the Society office where they will be most gratefully received.

Help !

Help is always needed at the end of every two months to compile the Bulletin and send it out to all members. Any member who would be willing to give assistance would be most welcome.

Index for 1975

The Bulletin Index for 1975 is enclosed with this issue.

SOCIETY FUNCTIONS

Sunday 27th June 1976 Mr M. Clifton will lead a day 'dudu-crawl' in Karura Forest. Please meet at the National Museum at 9 a.m. sharp and bring a picnic lunch if you wish to stay all day. Mrs Fordyce of Rosslyn has kindly invited members to tea in her garden after the outing.

Monday 12th July 1976 at 5.30 p.m. at the Museum Hall, Nairobi: Dr Hugh Lamprey of UNESCO and formerly Director of the Serengeti Research Institute will give an illustrated lecture on 'Plant - Animal Interactions'.

Saturday/Sunday 17th/18th July 1976 Dr Andrew Agnew will lead a week-end camp in the Eburru/Gilgil area. Campers must be self-contained with all equipment, food and water and be prepared for cold nights. Distance from Nairobi about 140 km, the latter part on very rough tracks. The object of the excursion will be to study the vegetation on Mount Eburru, and there will be a fair ammount of walking. Members wishing to take part in this camp should please fill in the enclosed slip and return it to Mrs L. Campbell, P.O. Box 14469, Nairobi to reach her not later than 5th July, when further directions and information will be forwarded.

Saturday/Sunday 7th/8th August 1976 Mt. Suswa excursion led by Mr and Mrs G. Preston. It is hoped to include visits to caves led by an experienced caver, and to go for a drive after dark to see nocturnal animals. Distance from Nairobi about 120 km. Only cars with high clearance will be able to negotiate a few very rough places on the ascent to Mt. Suswa, whereas the rest of the track and the tracks in the caldera are quite reasonable. Campers should be self-contained with all equipment, food and water and petrol for the return journey. Members wishing to take part in this excursion should please fill in the enclosed slip and return it to Mrs I. Preston, P.O. Box 21342, Nairobi before 27th July to enable directions and further information to reach them on time.

Monday 9th August at 5.30 p.m. at the Museum Hall, Nairobi: Dr Peter Hoppe of the Department of Animal Physiology, University of Nairobi will give an illustrated lecture: 'The Ecophysiology of the Dikdik, how to survive heat and aridity'.

Monday 13th September 1976 at 5.30 p.m. at the Museum Hall, Nairobi: Mr J.J. Gaudet, Senior lecturer in Botany, University of Nairobi will give an illustrated lecture: 'The development of the lake-side vegetation at Lake Naivasha'.

Future Dates :
9th/10th October: Weekend camp to Timau, details to be published later.
11th October: lecture.

Wednesday morning bird walks still continue, please meet at the National Museum at 8.45 a.m.

NEW MEMBERS

Life Member

Mr D.P. Carthy, Computer Centre, University of Hongkong.

Full Members

Mrs S. Armitage, P.O. Box 30301, Nairobi
Mrs I.E. Ayres, P.O. Box 44870, Nairobi
Mrs L.J. Barbour, P.O. Box 46005, Nairobi
Mr A. Gintzburger, P.O. Box 1521, Mwanza, Tanzania
Mrs A. Gintzburger, P.O. Box 1521, Mwanza, Tanzania
Mr G.A. Church, P.O. Box 30541, Nairobi
Mr J.G. Clarke, P.O. Box 30218, Nairobi
Ms Elsbeth Court, P.O. Box 47543, Nairobi
Miss W. Durbin, P.O. Box 30465, Nairobi
Ms Theresa Geissmann, P.O. Box 20008, Nairobi
Miss E. Hadrill, P.O. Box 30465, Nairobi
Mr P. Kuchar, P.O. Box 47146, Nairobi
Mr J.R. Malcolm, P.O. Box 284, Arusha, Tanzania
Mr S.P. Meacher, P.O. Box 522, Thika, Kenya
Ms Birte Mogensen, P.O. Box 40412, Nairobi
Mr R.B. Payne, Museum of Zoology, University of Michigan,
    Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109, U.S.A.
Mrs P. Smith, P.O. Box 30429, Nairobi
Mr S.J.S. Sumba, c/o Uganda Institute of Ecology, P.O. Box 22,
    Lake Katwe, Uganda
Mr P. Vermouth, P.O. Box 40469, Nairobi

Junior Members

Digby Green, P.O. Box 24632, Karen, Nairobi
Sultan Javer, P.O. Box 49815, Nairobi
Piyush R.B. Patel, P.O. Box 40194, Nairobi
Anil Pitrola, P.O. Box 45584, Nairobi
Dhirendra Pitrola, P.O. Box 45584, Nairobi

Change of Membership status - Life Member

Mr J. Reynolds, P.O. Box 40584, Nairobi

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NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Members of the Society (and non-members) are asked to follow these simple instructions when writing articles or letters for submission to the *Bulletin*. The *Bulletin* is presented each month in a duplicated format: the paper size is 20.5×23 cm (10×8 inches), line drawings can be reproduced but the area should not be more than 17.5×23 cm. Lettering on figures should preferably be in 'Letraset', neatly done in Indian ink or left blank: if the last method is followed, the lettering should be indicated on an overlaying sheet and should *not* be done on the figure. Figures should be prepared on good quality white writing paper and not on Bristol Board or other thick material. Whenever plants or animals are mentioned the scientific name should also be given but not in parenthesis. Trinomials should not be used unless there is good reason to do so. Author's names of species are not required.

Contributions may be typed (preferably) or written clearly and should be sent to: M. P. Clifton, Box 44486, Nairobi, Kenya. Receipt of contributions will be acknowledged.

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SOME NOTES ON THE GIANT FOREST-HOG, HYLOCHOERUS MEINERTZHAGENI

Of the four species of wild pig inhabiting the continent of Africa, the Giant Forest-Hog has been studied the least of all. This is because it was discovered as late as 1904, it inhabits only the montane forests and is both shy and nocturnal.

My first interest in this huge pig (the greatest recorded weight is 300 kg) goes back to the fifties when I was a Forester in charge of the Kakamega and Nandi group of forests. At that time it was so rare that all I ever saw were the large droppings and the places where they had grubbed and smashed the bushes. During the sixties I shot a few on Mount Kenya, Lembus and in the Mau forests when engaged on Buffalo, Syncerus caffer control for Government. Forest-Hogs bay readily to dogs and in the dark and dense bush of these mountain forests it is quite easy to mistake them for Buffalo. Now in the seventies I am employed by one of Kenya's game-viewing lodges in the eastern Aberdares and here I am able to watch and study this interesting pig. There are no nights when it is not present in considerable numbers. Since the end of the Kenya Mau Mau troubles, when the National Parks were able to resume control and give adequate protection, numbers have increased steadily until The Salient, as this part of the Aberdares is called, contains a concentration of Giant Forest-Hog comparable to any other area in Africa. In spite of this protection however, they remain shy and comparatively nocturnal.

AGGRESSION. Giant Forest-Hogs are both curious and aggressive. Should a sounder be on the area of the flood-lit salt lick and a Buffalo head appear framed in the bush maybe 40 m away, one or more of the Hogs will immediately move towards it, tail twitching angrily. This reaction is not confined to the boar; young pigs and even piglets a few months old are just as likely to go up with snout outstretched. Only when the Buffalo lumbers forward will they turn and flee. Should an Elephant, Loxodonta africana or Rhino Diceros bicornis approach a sounder engrossed on the salt lick, they will not scatter until the last possible moment. National Park's rangers on patrol often report that they have been worried by this aggressive behaviour.

During an average night four or five different sounders plus a few individuals normally visit the salt lick. Should they arrive at the same time there is invariably a confrontation between two boars. Sometimes they will acknowledge inferior status before the other comes too close and then he and his whole sounder will run for the safety of the bushes. This is rare, and more often a serious trial of strength follows. At no time is there that savage swing of the head so characteristic of encounters with hunter's dogs or natural predators, and which results in severe cutting by the tushes.

Preliminaries are snout-knocking with heads held high and the grinding of teeth in much the same manner as Wart-Hogs, Phacochoerus aethiopicus. This soon develops into the pushing of heads. At the serious stage they walk backwards as far as 20 m and then charge with all the violence of gladiators of old. The crash when the heads meet is considerable and can be clearly heard inside the building in spite of its sound-proofing. Before the contest is over both heads may show vivid patches of red bruising. During this time both sounders will gather in a semicircle as highly interested spectators, and periodically one or more will join in. The youngsters are rarely in the rear but come much to the fore, venturing up from time to time but retreating quickly should there be signs of retaliation. When one of the two boars decides that he has had enough there is a general wild chase for the bushes, and invariably one or two bottoms are butted before safety is reached.

Over the years the following mammals have been recorded as being chased by adult Forest-Hogs (not always boars, and sometimes for considerable distances): Leopard, Panthera pardus, Spotted Hyaena Crocuta crocuta, Bongo Boocerus eurycerus and Bushbuck, Tragelaphus scriptus.

MOBBING. As a variation of the normal acts of aggression is the mobbing of large mammals such as Rhino and Buffalo when they are drinking or nibbling salt. Invariably they choose a beast which has its back to them, and the whole sounder approaches with snouts raised and stand a few metres away. They are all nervous and ready for instant flight should he back or turn round, but usually he is too busy though probably aware of their approach. Once positioned a Hog more bold than the rest, usually just over half-grown, will venture near and sniff under the tail. He may even have to stand on his toes to reach if it is a Rhino. At this stage the mobbed beast usually turns, and as he does the whole sounder scurries for the shelter of the bushes.

Sometimes one feels that Giant Forest-Hog have a distinct sense of humour, and this was well illustrated one evening. It had been a lovely day and a huge Buffalo bull was snoozing in the warmth of the westering sun as he lay across a game-trail leading from a deep valley into the glade. A sounder of Forest-

Hogs approached, led by the oldest sow. All deviated carefully round the rump of the sleeping bull and hurried on. As always, the boar covered the rear and as soon as he reached this tempting object he butted it two or three times, taking care to be well on his way before the Buffalo could scramble to his feet.

One evening a strange act was witnessed which may account for this mobbing behaviour. A Buffalo bull was drinking and a sounder of Hogs approached in the usual manner. Instead of one cheeky Hog sneaking up and sniffing under the tail, two well-grown youngsters moved towards him together. They made no effort to stretch as high as the tail but commenced to lick just above the hocks. As always they were both extremely apprehensive, anticipating his every movement as a preliminary to turn, but he did not do so and they licked for a full minute before he sent them scattering. It is possible that certain salts found on the Buffalo's skin are needed by the Hogs.

SOUNDER CONSTRUCTION. The largest sounder recorded to date has been 24, though I do not doubt they are sometimes larger. This consisted on one boar, four sows, and the remainder juveniles varying in size down to piglets. Old boars and sows are seen singly but this is not common and may be explained by their desire to keep in dense cover.

When a boar becomes adult he leaves the sounder and joins a single sow which presumably left its own sounder voluntarily, though this point is not certain. Physically and sexually he is by no means as well developed as some of the older boars commanding larger sounders. A typical group seen recently consists of one young boar, one young sow, two yearlings and two piglets. The juvenile sows will remain with him as they mature and his litters will become progressively larger. Solitary old boars have been watched getting gradually weaker until they die peacefully without any predator involvement. This is a great tribute to the fighting qualities of the Giant Forest-Hog.

DEFENSIVE FORMATION. The actions of the patriarchal boars are dictatorial. During migrations he always covers the rear while an old sow leads, and the piglets are either below their mother's stomachs or bunched in the centre. When drinking the sounder spreads out, with the boar in the centre, the juveniles on either side of him, and his oldest sows covering the flanks. Should a youngster break formation the boar will swing his head and force it to return. There has been ample evidence of both Leopard and Hyaena snatching a piglet when the sounder is in dense cover and at a disadvantage. However, in the open when predators are near, the whole sounder goes into laager with the youngest in the centre, much as Musk Oxen do when attacked by Wolves. At such times the boars have been watched chasing individual Hyaena for considerable distances. Provided the sounder stands its ground a kill is seldom made, the Hyaena often departing after a few minutes. Should they lose nerve and run, the straggling youngsters are often cut off and taken.

BREEDING. Most Giant Forest-Hog litters are born towards the end of the dry season, when farrowing conditions are good and there is the promise of new grass to supply milk. However, odd litters may be seen the year round. They are reported to make a grass nest in dense cover, but such a nest has not been observed and it could be that in favourable country such as The Salient they do not bother. Certainly they bring the litter forth when extremely young, probably less than a week old. At that age they are uniform dark brown in colour, and are so small that they are quite capable of falling into a Buffalo's footprint and have difficulty climbing out again. Young sows appear to have no more than two piglets and the litter size increases with age; 11 have been recorded together. Piglets will suckle from any sow but this particular little flock continually followed the mother and, unless another sow had died, they all belonged to her. For about two weeks the young stay constantly beneath their mother's stomach, which is low-slung under normal conditions. Sometimes no more than a row of little feet can be seen, with a glimpse of one complete piglet between her hindlegs when she turns away. One is greatly impressed by the co-ordination of movement. All Forest-Hogs stop to listen every few metres and when the mother stops, the row of little feet stops. When she moves, they move. As the piglets grow older they indulge in a great deal of fighting. It is at such times that the sow is apt to forget them and move on. A Leopard hiding in the bushes may act as referee and stop the fight.

FEEDING. Giant Forest-Hog are omnivorous. In The Salient area of the Aberdares they are almost wholly grazers and it is rare to watch them browsing low bush. In the more dense Kakamega and Nandi forests there is evidence of rooting and eating berries. Probably they also eat the eggs and chicks of ground-nesting birds. On Mount Kenya and The Mau they eat the young shoots of bamboo, Arundinaria alpina devastating great areas. As with all pigs they will eat meat or carrion, should it be available. One night, 48 hours after a Buffalo had been killed by Hyaena, we had a wonderful view of a solitary Hyaena and a huge boar pulling each side of the rib-cage - all that was left. The pig won, drove the Hyaena away, and nibbled at the ribs for some time before leaving.

SURVIVAL PROSPECTS. Giant Forest-Hogs appear to have only two great enemies - Man and disease. Natural predators alone do not appear to be able to kill more than a small proportion of young. Poachers using dogs often call them off a Hog at bay should there be plenty of less formidable game to kill, such as Bushbuck. Nevertheless many Hogs are killed by meat-hungry hunters.

The great rinderpest epidemic of the 1890's undoubtedly killed great numbers of Giant Forest-Hog and periodically this terrible scourge has broken out since. Their numbers must have been at a very low ebb at the time of their discovery in 1904. Probably swine-fever also keeps the population down. Provided the National Parks maintain the very high level of their present anti-poaching patrols on the Aberdares, the survival of this species is assured.

R.J. Prickett,
P.O. Box 792,
NYERI, Kenya.

UNUSUAL GIRAFFE BEHAVIOUR

While teaching at Wajir Secondary School I often saw Reticulated Giraffe, Giraffa camelopardalis reticulata come into the school compound to drink at a pond behind the laboratory. The school is surrounded on three sides by a barbed wire fence 3.2 m high. The Giraffe usually entered from the north-east corner of the compound, where there is no fence, or sometimes through a hole in the south-west corner.

One morning in 1973, when I was duty master, one of the school watchmen reported to me that during the night a Giraffe had run into the fence behind the dining hall and broken its neck. On checking I saw a dead young mature female Reticulated Giraffe lying next to the fence. The watchman said that something must have frightened it because it was running very fast when it hit the fence. The Game Department was called and they cut up the animal and took it away.

The next morning the same watchman reported that three Giraffe had knocked down part of the fence during the night. I returned with him to the dining hall and saw that a large section of fence was down where the Giraffe had died the night before. The watchman said that the three animals had come to the spot where the first Giraffe had hit the fence and then began to systematically knock the fence down by leaning against the posts until they buckled near the base. This could not have been easy, even for an animal as strong as a Giraffe, for the fence is held up by 10 cm square concrete posts with four steel reinforcing rods inside. After pushing over about 30 m of fence they turned around and left the compound.

The watchman believes, and I am inclined to agree with him, that the Giraffe deliberately destroyed the fence at the spot where one of their own had died the night before. The fence had been erected eight years before and previously no Giraffe had ever attempted to knock it down.

John Miskell,
Dept. of Entomology,
P.O. Box 40658,
NAIROBI, Kenya.

LEVIATHAN CAVE, CHYULU HILLS, KENYA

During mid-April 1976, a team of seven members of the Cave Exploration Group of East Africa (C.E.G.) undertook a 10 day expedition in what is at present claimed as the world's longest and deepest lava cave. The cave lies in a magnificent wilderness of geologically recent ash-cones and vast lava fields which make up the 65 km long mountain range of the Chyulu Hills, bordering on Tsavo National Park (West).

At 1600m, high in the Chyulu range above Kibwezi town, and running eastwards from the base of the ash-cones and finally beneath the thick game inhabited Kibwezi forest, Leviathan Cave was first 'discovered' through a study of aerial photographs and received its first C.E.G. investigation in September 1975. It took C.E.G. members five extended two and three day trips to explore the main tunnel line and some of the upper levels, bivouacs being made in the cave. Difficulties of exploration were aggravated by a 240 km drive from Nairobi, a hike of 4 km to the main entrance and by having to back pack all water supplies in addition to foodstuffs and equipment. To locate additional entrances over the cave it also became necessary to blaze trails through the forest on compass traverses, the last two collapse holes lying deep within the Kibwezi forest, a further 4 km downflow of the main entrance. Supply-lines to the farthest reaches of the cave were, therefore, rather extended and it became apparent that to produce a high-grade survey of the entire cave would be a protracted affair involving many costly visits. The ten day expedition was organised to establish the cave's exact length and vertical range as well as to investigate many upper levels which remained un-entered.

The principal tunnel of Leviathan Cave, with many sections up to 10 - 15 m in diameter and large enough to permit a bus, have now been explored from an ash-choke directly beneath the slope of the source volcano, down-stream to a seemingly impenetrable boulder seal for a single passage length of eight km ! This great length is only broken in two places by collapse entrances, where linking digs through boulders had to be undertaken, dividing the passage into 3.5, 2.5 and 2.0 km segments. Ten other collapse entrances are known over the cave line, but each of these provides entry to high passage sections, the otherwise continuous lower levels passing beneath. Discontinuity of the upper levels or natural breaks in their floors provides access to the lower sections.

Biologically the cave was only briefly investigated, the capture of cave life being undertaken by the Expedition's zoologists, Alison and Chris Hillman. Three types of insectivorous bats were taken, species of Rhinolophus, Miniopterus and Hipposideros - the latter forming a large colony at the very end of the cave and being of an attractive orange colour - and one species of Rousettus fruit bat which occured in many hundreds. Bat parasites, springtails, small flies, beetles, two varieties of cockroach and even some scorpions were collected. Of the cockroaches one small type is transparent, blind and apparently a cavernicole likely to be entirely new to science.

Many pottery fragments and some incomplete pots of two different decorative styles were found at and in the tunnel beyond 'Pottery Collapse' and were thought to have been left by poachers.

During eight full days almost consistently underground, two teams tackled the survey of the great cave, often working 10 - 13 hours daily in order to complete the task during the alloted time. Excepting for many roof holes in the main passage line which almost certainly give access to additional upper levels, the greater part of the cave was completed, revealing a total surveyed passage length of 11 km ! A pretty impressive total. Total depth, by vertical range, came to 470 m over the eight km distance from top to bottom 'end'. In addition it was found that the tube in which the Advanced Base Camp was established was itself a braided upper level system with an estimated one km of passages, and a link with Leviathan is expected.

J.W. Simons, Chairman,
Cave Exploration Group
of East Africa,
P.O. Box 47583,
NAIROBI, Kenya

For further details on Leviathan Cave, see Cave Exploration Group of East Africa Overseas Release, June 1976. Ed.

DR. VICTOR GURNER LOGAN VAN SOMEREN

On 24th July 1976, Dr. Victor Gurner Logan van Someren, past editor of the Society's Journal and Curator of the Museum (then run by the Society), died at Karen, Nairobi two months short of his 90th birthday.

Dr. van Someren, a very accomplished naturalist, was born in Melbourne, Australia in October 1886, and lived part of his early life in the Federated Malay States where his father, Robert Garling van Someren practised at the bar.

He was educated at George Watsons in Edinburgh and then went to Edinburgh University where he graduated L.D.S., L.R.C.P. and L.R.C.S. After appointment as a medical officer in the Colonial Service, he came to the then British East Africa in 1911. He served first as a medical officer in Kisumu, Nakuru and Nairobi and later became Government Dental Surgeon until 1932.

The Society, of which Dr. van Someren was an early member, had a small Museum of two rooms in a building in Jeevanjee Street and he became the third Curator in 1914, following J.J. Anderson (first Government Entomologist) and Arthur Loveridge. He continued as Curator until the new Museum was built below the present Masonic Lodge on Kirk Road. When Sir Robert Coryndon, Governor of Kenya, died in 1928, a public appeal was started by Dr. van Someren and the money raised built the Coryndon Memorial Museum, now housing the Exhibit Galleries of the National Museum. He was its first full-time Director and retired in 1940 to his four ha plot at Karen, 'The Sanctuary' where he died.

He was editor of the Journal for 15 years; covering 44 numbers and contributed largely to the contents of these parts. His interest in birds and butterflies started when he was a school boy but intensified when his elder brother, Dr. Robert van Someren was appointed a medical officer in Uganda in 1908. His collections of birds were sent to his younger brother while he was still at university in Edinburgh.

On arrival in East Africa he started collecting in earnest and sent back to Edinburgh 2000 bird skins, and in 1950 he sent 17000 bird skins to Chicago. Some few (hundred) were also sent to Tervuren. As one of the greatest naturalists East Africa will see, he was not confined to birds, but in the words of Austin L. Rand 'The study of mammals, birds, entomology and botany he considered inseparable !'.

He was an assiduous collector of insects and plants, his collection of insects was sent to the British Museum (Natural History) in 1959 which N.D. Riley said was the most important accession that year, estimated to total 300000 specimens of all Orders ! He kept back a reference collection of over 16000 specimens, which he added to over the years before sending them to the American Museum of Natural History. A large part of his botanical collection is at Kew Herbarium.

As if this total was not sufficient, he wrote extensively about the birds and butterflies he so ably collected. The first long series of papers on birds and butterflies were published in the Society's Journal between 1925 and 1939. These were profusely illustrated with plates, some in colour, and still stand as one of the important contributions to the study of the avifauna and the butterflies of our area. Unfortunately, neither series was ever completed.

In 1938 he led the Museum expedition to the Chyulu Hills and then set down the results of the birds, butterflies and the general narrative, as well as producing the photographs. This was, of course, interspersed with many shorter papers to entomological and ornithological journals all over the world. His popular account of 'Days with Birds' was fully illustrated with his own photographs; no mean feat when large plate cameras were the only means of taking pictures of wild life.

To add to this total we also have his bird paintings (copies of some were reproduced in his bird papers in our Journal) which are dated from 1907 to 1973. He finished with over 2000 plates of East African and Congo birds which are now being published in the United States, Volume 1 has already appeared, and there are 15 more to follow!

His great work on emtomology will always be his 'Revisional

Notes on African Charaxes' which was published by the British Museum in 10 parts, the last of which was produced in 1975. It is the basic work on this group from which everyone else will start as it brings up to date the scattered information on this very popular genus of butterflies.

He was awarded the Lund Medal for his contributions to African ornithology and was a Fellow of the Linnean Society and the Royal Entomological Society of London. He was also a member of the British Ornithologist's Union and the British Ornithologist's Club among many other scientific bodies around the world.

This well rounded naturalist had another facet, little known, of being an expert cabinet maker. When Curator and then Director of the Museum, he made most of the cabinets now in use in the Entomology Department, the National Museum. He also made the exhibits in the main hall, a lake side scene of waterbirds, the Bongo group (taken down a year or two ago) and the Leopards which is still on display.

Unfortunately, it was only in the last eight years that I came to know him. On my arrival in Kenya, I found a letter dated two weeks previously demanding to know why I had not been to see him ! This was typical of him, but when you went to see him all his outer and apparent crustiness disappeared and he would hold you enthralled by the extent of his knowledge.

To anyone he had not met before he appeared to be in his dotage, talking rather as though he had known things but could not remember quite what it was he wanted to recall. Woe betide anyone who tried to show him that they knew more than he did ! I have known him, under these circumstances, to talk for over an hour on various female forms of black Charaxes, and how they could not be the same species, without any reference to the specimens.

As I came to know him better he kindly lent me notes on various subjects, culminating in a very long and lovely poem which he had written on the animals he saw around his plot. This is illustrated round the edge of the poem with Bushbuck, Robin-Chats, Olive Thrushes etc. It is a very personal and beautiful tribute to this great naturalist.

Finally, no one who knew him well will ever forget his evening drink. One strong peg of whisky, the same of lime juice and topped up with water. Enough to make a Scot wince ! I asked him why he drank it like this and typically he replied, with a ghost of a smile, 'I don't like the taste, but I enjoy the effect'. A very great man in whose passing, East Africa is much the poorer.

M.P. Clifton

A VISIT TO BUSHWACKERS

Bushwackers Safari Camp, near Kibwezi, Kenya is a delightful place well known to many of us. It is especially pleasant at this time of year, warm without being uncomfortably hot. You need a jersey in the morning and evening, and a blanket at night, but the days are warm enough for pottering about or sitting and watching what comes. The camp itself is much improved. The bandas have been extensively renewed and repaired with the help of our fellow member, Tom Huels who was studying Superb Starlings, Spreo superbus there, and who has now returned to America. Security precautions have been tightened up and thieving seems to have stopped.

The country is very dry. In the first half of the year it only received 75 mm of rain instead of the 150 - 175 mm which is considered the average. Most of the trees have shed all their leaves. Under a grey sky the trunks and twigs are grey, with only here and there a green patch where some evergreen bush, usually Boscia, retains its leathery leaves. The camp area looks greener, being indeed a remnant of the riverside vegetation. Terminalia brownii has leaves and Albizzia anthelmintica even has flowers. But it is the seed-pods and cases which mainly attract attention. With the aid of the Kamba names supplied by the camp staff, it is often possible to identify the trees in Dale and Greenway, 'Kenya Trees and Shrubs'. There is no mistaking the curly green pods of Acacia tortilis and the flat papery ones of A. senegal. There are the long rough pods of Cassia abreviata - and do not pick up, as I did, pieces of makuti as another species. They rattle convincingly when shaken, but you will not be able to find the tree from which they came. Under Terminalia brownii some of its red-winged seeds can still be found, and the hard cases of Sterculia rhynchocarpa are lying about, gnawed by the Striped Ground Squirrel, Xerus erythropus, to get at the seeds inside. Perhaps the most striking of all are the pods of Entada leptostachya, falling in rectangular pieces out of their skeleton frames.

Birds as usual are a great pleasure to watch. The most amusing thing I noticed on this visit was the extreme aggressiveness of D'Arnaud's Barbet, Trachyphonus darnaudii. It is a small birds, but uses its powerful Barbet's bill to good effect and drives everything else off the bird-table. I saw it make a really vicious attack on a Ruppell's Starling, Lamprotornis caudata, that did not get out of the way quickly enough. Little blue feathers floated away on the breeze.

'Corvinella'

THE STATUS OF THE TAITA FALCON

The Taita Falcon, Falco fasciinucha, is known to occur from the southern Ethiopian Highlands to the Crater Highlands of northern Tanzania, always very rarely, and also in the Victoria Falls Gorge (Brown 1970, African Birds of Prey pp 125-126). He adds (amplified in a letter) that it seems to be a scarce falcon of rock faces in semi-arid country preferably at a fair to highish elevation.

The type specimen is from the Taita Hills in south-east Kenya but how many others have been collected or seen in the area I do not know. Certainly the standard guides all state Voi as a locality for this species.

I have now seen birds on three separate occasions (details below) which appeared to be Taita Falcons. I have never certainly seen this species and I should emphasize that I am not claiming these as definite records, but in view of the rarity of even possible sightings I think it worth recording them. It should be noted that Peregrines, F. peregrinus and Lanners, F. biarmicus both occur in Tsavo East near Voi, especially in the Palaearctic winter and Lanners at least are quite common on many of the big rock faces in the Taita Hills.

My three records are as follows:

1) 20th August 1975 - 2 from the top of Bura Bluff, Taita Hills (seen with Andrew Wigram, who also has a possible sighting of 2 at the South end of Sagalla Hill).
The two birds were flying about very fast in a strong wind. No good views were obtained, but they appeared medium-sized and rather stocky for a falcon. They were too dark for Lanner (seen 2 or 3 other times that day) and did not look like Peregrine, and were certainly not African Hobby F. cuvieri, this last being much smaller.

2) 7th December 1975 - 2 (possibly 3) from the top of Vuria Peak, Taita Hills. (Seen with a party from Nairobi University Zoology Department and others)
At least two individuals were flying around mainly below us near the cliff on the South side of Vuria. As before they

appeared rather stocky and both the shortish tail and the paler rump (than the rest of the upper-parts) were noted on some of their 'passes'.

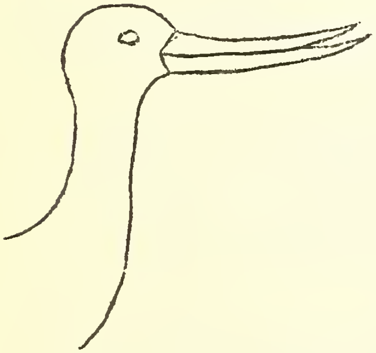
3) 12th June 1976 - 1 at Kanderi Swamp, 8 km east of Voi in Tsavo East National Park (seen on my own).
One individual flew over my head and later landed briefly on a dead tree. My first impression was of a European Hobby F. subbuteo; the date however makes this virtually impossible. It was very wild but had a definite pale rump and seemed too small for a Peregrine or Lanner, and did not have the prominent chestnut nape patch of the last though I would not exclude that it had some chestnut. However, it did appear to have rather pale underparts suggesting one of these.
About 5 minutes later about ½ km further on there was a definite Peregrine on top of another dead tree. I had no doubts at all about identity of this bird from the first view, and I managed to get quite close before it flew off. It did not have an obvious pale rump and the upper-parts were generally darker than the first bird.

Of these three I consider the last the most probable and the first the least as to being Taita Falcons.

I hope other people travelling to the coast will keep an eye out for this bird, and report it if and when they see it.

Peter C. Lack,
P.O. Box 14, VOI, Kenya.

BILL DEFORMITY OF YELLOW-BILLED STORK



This Yellow-billed Stork, Ibis ibis, with an upcurved and permanently open bill was seen on a farm pond near Njoro, Kenya during the first week of February 1976. It was immature but full grown and appeared to be healthy and flew strongly.

John Squire,
P.O. Box 40, NJORO,
Kenya.

FEEDING PREFERENCES OF SOME SUNBIRDS

In April and particularly over the Easter period, 1976, nets were set up on the plot at Karen, Kenya to ring some migrant birds. Seven to nine nets were employed, sited at various points in the plot of some 3 ha, and we captured an interesting lot of Sunbirds which were number and colour ringed.

Analysis of the species captured and the net positions was of interest as there was a clearly defined division according to site, time of day and the species involved with regard to the nectar producing flowers nearby. One net was particularly successful as it was placed to intercept birds visiting a small compact group of the greenish-yellow flowering *Crotalaria agatiflora*. These shrubs were some 2 m high and next to a flowering *Erythrina abyssinica*, but all in open grassland.

Other nets were set near nectar plants such as Aloes, *Bryophyllum* etc, and were operated from around 08.00 hours to 18.00 hours. They were visited on a round approximately every 20 - 30 minutes, the time it took to walk, extract birds, record them and their weights, sex, ring etc. We took many birds of a large number of species in addition to Sunbirds.

The total capture was 53 Sunbirds of seven species over 6+ days, approximately 300 hours trapping time. Of these 26 were female and 27 male. In the '*Crotalaria*' net 38 birds were captured compared with 15 for all other nets. In fact, there were only 33 trapping hours at the '*Crotalaria*' net compared with 300 hours at all other nets. Of the 53 Sunbirds taken 21 were Golden-wing, *Nectarinia reichenowi*, 10 Bronze, *N. kilimensis* 10 Amethyst, *N. amethystina*, 7 Collared, *Anthreptes collaris*, 3 Variable *N. venusta* with 1 Malachite, *N. famosa* and 1 Eastern Double-collared, *N. mediocris*. Analysis by sex and weights are shown in the Table.

Although the '*Crotalaria*' net took various birds during the day it was only after 15.30 hours that it captured the Sunbirds. Earlier the *Erythrina* tree was visited from time to time by the larger species but they did not go to the nearby *Crotalaria*. Birds visited the other nectar flowers at various times of the day, including some of the larger Sunbirds, but were not captured. The other nets caught a few Sunbirds at various times, but the majority were taken early in the morning.

CvS ascertained with *C. agatiflora* that nectar was present in the flowers that had opened that morning and there was still some in the unfertilised flowers of the previous day. Moreover, nectar taken from the open flower in the early morning was

* (A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)	(H)	(I)	(J)
Golden-wing *N. reichenowi*	21	m 10 f 11	16 gm 15 gm	12 gm 13 gm	14.3 gm 14.35 gm	10 10	0 1	20	1
Bronze *N. kilimensis*	10	m 5 f 5	18 gm 15 gm	15 gm 13 gm	16.6 gm 14.1 gm	4 3	1 2	7	3
Amethyst *N. amethystina*	10	m 4 f 6	12 gm 12 gm	10 gm 10 gm	11.0 gm 11.1 gm	4 4	0 2	8	2
Collared *A. collaris*	7	m 4 f 3	7.5 gm 8.5 gm	7 gm 7 gm	7.4 gm 7.7 gm	0 0	4 3	0	7
Variable *N. venusta*	3	m 3 f 0	8 gm - --	7 gm - --	7.3 gm -- --	2 0	1 0	2	1
Malachite *N. famosa*	1	m 1 f 0	- -- - --	- -- - --	14 gm -- --	1 0	0 0	1	0
E. D.-Collared *N. mediocris*	1	m 1 f 0	- -- - --	- -- - --	escaped -- --	0 0	1 0	0	1

* (A) - Sunbirds
(B) - Total (both sexes)
(C) - Total for each sex
(D) - Maximum weight
(E) - Minimum weight
m - male

(F) - Mean
(G) - Captured in '*Crotalaria*' Net
(H) - Captured in other nets
(I) - Total for '*Crotalaria*' Net
(J) - Total for other nets
f - female

* (A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)	(H)	(I)	(J)
Golden-wing N. reichenowi	21	m 10 f 11	16 gm 15 gm	12 gm 13 gm	14.3 gm 14.35 gm	10 10	0 1	20	1
Bronze N. kilimensis	10	m 5 f 5	18 gm 15 gm	15 gm 13 gm	16.6 gm 14.1 gm	4 3	1 2	7	3
Amethyst N. amethystina	10	m 4 f 6	12 gm 12 gm	10 gm 10 gm	11.0 gm 11.1 gm	4 4	0 2	8	2
Collared A. collaris	7	m 4 f 3	7.5 gm 8.5 gm	7 gm 7 gm	7.4 gm 7.7 gm	0 0	4 3	0	7
Variable N. venusta	3	m 3 f 0	8 gm - --	7 gm - --	7.3 gm -- --	2 0	1 0	2	1
Malachite N. famosa	1	m 1 f 0	- -- - --	- -- - --	14 gm -- --	1 0	0 0	1	0
E. D.-Collared N. mediocris	1	m 1 f 0	- -- - --	- -- - --	escaped -- --	0 0	1 0	0	1

* (A) - Sunbirds
(B) - Total (both sexes)
(C) - Total for each sex
(D) - Maximum weight
(E) - Minimum weight
m - male

(F) - Mean
(G) - Captured in 'Crotalaria'Net
(H) - Captured in other nets
(I) - Total for 'Crotalaria' Net
(J) - Total for other nets
f - female

replaced by the afternoon. Nectar was extracted to as near zero as possible in marked flowers in the early morning and by afternoon they had produced more. Nectar production ceases once pollination had taken place. The liquid was extracted by means of a very fine capillary tube, measured and the quantity calculated. Thus, nectar was available to the birds in the early morning and throughout the day. One is left to wonder why Crotalaria was not used in the afternoon.

It was strange that the smaller species especially the Collared did not visit the Crotalaria but preferred the Petria nobilis, Bryophyllum, garden Salvia, Fuschia and indigenous Grewia similis. These plants were not visited by the larger Sunbirds. The Amethyst was seen at Aloes as well as Erythrina. This suggests either a nectar preference or maybe a colour preference. However, the Golden-wing, Bronze and Malachite are regular visitors to the red/orange flowers of Leonotis spp. and the many coloured Loranthus spp. Beak length may account for certain preferences for the shorter-beaked birds might not be able to probe certain flowers satisfactorily. The nectaries and flow are very deeply shielded by the lateral sepals in the flowers of Erythrina and Crotalaria which suggests that a long curved bill is essential to reach this resource.

Another interesting point is that the plot is known to have resident pairs of Sunbirds which breed regularly, consisting of two pairs of Eastern Double-collared, one of Bronze, two of Amethyst with three each of Variable and Collared. There are no resident Golden-wing so that the influx of birds shows that these were on a local migration probably following up the flowering successions of various plants in the whole of the Karen area. Furthermore, we did not re-capture any of the ringed birds which suggests that they were only making a temporary stop to feed during their general movement.

Readers are requested, please, to report any colour banded Sunbirds to the writers or the Ringing Organizer, G.C. Backhurst. Dr Frank Gill's team at Gilgil have banded a great many Sunbirds but have had exceptionally few recoveries. Where do these birds go ? Reports of sightings may help solve this problem. Joseph Mwaki of the birdroom at the Museum told me that he found many Sunbirds at Leonotis flowers over the Easter weekend at his home near Donyo Sabuk, but the following weekend not a Sunbird was to be seen !

G.R. Cunningham van Someren & John Miskell,
P.O. Box 40658, NAIROBI,
Kenya

SOME OBSERVATIONS DURING SPRING PASSAGE IN TSAVO WEST

When my family and I drove through Tsavo West National Park, Kenya on the morning of 13th April 1976, we saw occasional Rollers, *Coracias garrulus*, Cuckoos and Hobbies, *Falco subbuteo* flying roughly North East. By mid-day a storm had developed somewhere to the North West and the number of birds passing had obviously increased. At one point we found ourselves surrounded by Rollers and stopped to count them. This loose group was moving in a belt, 100 m or so wide, initially extending beyond binocular vision and numbered over 400. During the afternoon we saw over 1000 in similar groups.

Swallows, *Hirundo rustica* were even more numerous and were moving with the Rollers. Hobbies passed by in singles and small groups. Once a group of Eastern Red-footed Falcons, *Falco amurensis* went past, keeping more closely together than the Hobbies, although two or three Hobbies were moving with them. Also, apparently part of the same passage, were over 100 Cuckoos, *Cuculus canorus*, and Black-and-White Cuckoos, *Clamator jacobinus*; several tens of Red-backed Shrikes, *Lanius collurio* and Red-tailed Shrikes, *L. isabellinus*, Lesser Grey Shrikes, *L. minor*, Golden Orioles, *Oriolus oriolus*, Rock Thrushes, *Monticola saxatilis* with Isabelline Wheatears, *Oenanthe isabellina* smaller numbers of European Wheatears, *O. oenanthe*, and Pied Wheatears, *O. pleschanka* and a single Greater Spotted Cuckoo, *Clamator glandarius*.

The next day at Lake Jipe, the storm had passed and several tens of Blue-cheeked Bee-eaters, *Merops superciliosus* were feeding above the lake edge. Willow Warblers, *Phylloscopus trochilus* and Spotted Flycatchers, *Muscicapa striata* were numerous in the reeds and shrubs and smaller numbers of Sedge Warblers, *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus* and Great Reed Warblers (probably *A. griseldis* *) were seen. During the following evening at Lake Jipe, Swallows passed along the lake edge in thousands and Sand Martins, *Riparia riparia* in hundreds.

John Squire,
P.O. Box 40, NJORO,
Kenya.

* Dr. D.J. Pearson notes 'probably *Acrocephalus arundinaceus* unless reasons are given. There are very few *griseldis* records for spring'. Ed.

EBURRU CAMP - 17th JULY 1976

If you imagine the Rift Valley full of water, then Eburru Mountain would be a peninsular sticking out of the Mau Escarpment. On the Isthmus of the peninsular is a lower watershed where a rough road crosses from Ndabibi Farm, Naivasha to Kiambogo Farm, Nakuru, and it was on this road, near the watershed, that we camped. There was plenty of room for all 14 cars and 40 people in the shade of well-grown *Acacia hockii* trees and lawns of mown grass; in fact an excellent site, very kindly offered by the Assistant Manager of Kiambogo Farm, Mr Julius Njoroge, to whom we are very grateful.

The first afternoon (before and after rain) was spent exploring the neighbouring gorge. Around the camp was secondary bushland of *Tarchonanthus camphoratus*, but in the gorge, on a steep South facing slope, there grew an open community of *Protea kilimandscharica*, *Erica arborea*, the blue-flowered pea family shrub, *Psoralea foliosa*, scented *Cymbopogon* tussocks with odd trees of *Cussonia*; *Commelina reptans* was also recorded.

It had dried well enough to have a camp fire that evening, and at 8.30 the next morning the cars were taken a few km along the ridge for the start of a walk up into the Mau Escarpment forest. Olive, *Podocarpus milanjianus* and Juniper were the major trees of the forest, and Colobus Monkeys, *Colobus abyssinicus* were seen. There has been some exploitation, but nevertheless there are interesting plant communities, apart from the uniform *Hypoestes aristata* of the forest floor, especially on forest/grassland edges and we all enjoyed the flowering climber, *Periploca linearifolia*.

The forest edges here hold the greatest concentration of *Cynoglossum* species found in Kenya, including un-named ones, and we also identified *Cyphostemma nodiglandulosum*, *Carduus kikuyorum* and (painfully for some) *Urtica massaica*.

A.D.Q. Agnew.

Plant lists were included and can be seen in the Society's office. Ed.

PLANT GEOGRAPHY

Dr. Andrew Agnew, former Chairman of our Society, returned to Kenya for a spell of work and gave us a most interesting talk on plant geography. One of the chief points of the present distribution of plants is that it throws light on the very early history of our planet. It was the biologists who saw the necessity of the theory of Continental Drift when the geologists were still opposed to it, but they later supported it with reasons of their own. The distribution of plants illustrates this theory and there is no other way of explaining the distribution of certain families, for example, the Veloziaceae which are found in South and East Africa and South America, and the Trichopodiaceae which are found in Madagascar, South India and Indonesia, suggesting the northward drift of the Indian Sub-Continent which forced up the Himalayas.

Changes in climate have also left their record in the distribution of plants. Our beautiful Canarina is also found, as its name suggests, in the Canary Islands. Perhaps it was a plant of the huge forests that must have covered the present Mediterranean in Tertiary times. When the climate become drier and colder, this forest was broken up and only patches remain. These plants cannot possibly have reached their present positions carried by wind or birds as we must believe other species were carried to remote inlands.

Our own mountain flora must have spread from mountain top to mountain top in a similar way and taken root as the habitat became suitable for them. All these points were illustrated by impressive slides and diagrams. Older members were delighted to see and hear Dr Agnew again and all members enjoyed his talk.

P.M. Allen.

PLANT-ANIMAL INTERACTIONS

On 12th July 1976, Dr H.F. Lamprey gave a most interesting talk on 'Plant-Animal Interactions' based on nearly 25 years' experience as a wildlife biologist in East Africa during which he has been Principal of the College of Wildlife Management at Mweka and Director of the Serengeti Research Institute.

Dr Lamprey first pointed out that although the animal kingdom is nutritionally dependent on plants the 'structure' of many plant communities is determined by animals. For example, the existence of the Serengeti short-grass plains is not determined primarily by soil and climatic factors, but by the grazing of an array of herbivorous mammals in whose absence a quite different plant community would develop as demonstrated by 'exclosure' experiments.

He went on the describe some of the complex ecological relationships found between Acacia species and animals, concentrating on the role of mammals, particularly the Elephant and Impala, in bringing about dispersal and germination of Acacia tortilis seeds. A. tortilis has fruits whose shape, size and nutritional content are adaptations attracting large mammals to eat them. The hard rounded seeds pass through the alimentary canal undigested and are dispersed in the mammal's faeces which sometimes consist mainly of A. tortilis seeds (one Elephant dropping may contain over 10000 seeds). Germination tests showed that non-ingested seeds have a germination rate of about 1% while egested ones have a rate of between 20% (ex-Elephant) and 30% (ex-Impala) The main reason for this difference is that nearly all A. tortilis seeds are infested by larvae of the beetle Bruchidius spadiceus which destroy the embryos of most seeds. Seeds swallowed before vital parts have been destroyed are 'saved' through being ingested since the beetle larvae are killed by methane released in the mammalian herbivore's alimentary canal. Another remarkable relationship described was dispersal of spores of a parasitic 'rust' fungus as a result of the spores closely mimicing an Acacia pollen collected from leaf surfaces by sewat bees.

Dr Lamprey then dealt briefly with the 'Elephant problem' and gave some criteria for defining 'ecological damage'. Real damage is when animal activity causes irreversible changes in an ecosystem which are associated with a loss of top soil. This theme was expanded as he told us of his work on desert formation which he illustrated with aerial slides showing the terrible effects of overstocking with domestic animals in the Sudan. Although the present-day Sahara appears to be mainly the result of some 5000 years of ecological abuse by man, its rate of formation is accelerating and is now probably a 1000 times greater than in the natural cycles from savannah to desert that have occurred in the past as a result of long term climatic changes. In one area the desert has advanced between 90 and 120 km in the last 18 years. It was stressed that if there is any solution to this problem it can only result from cooperation between ecologists and sociologists. An almost insurmountable problem is that any Government bold enough to instigate realistic measures to halt and, hopefully, reverse desert formation would certainly be ousted by the nomad electorate.

All those who attended the meeting hope that Dr. Lamprey will be free to accept the Society's invitation to give us another stimulating lecture.

J.F. Reynolds.

THE DIK-DIK AND ITS ENVIRONMENT

At the August meeting of the Society, Dr Peter Hoppe gave us a fascinating talk. It was a study of Eco-physiology, or how the body deals with the problems of the environment. An animal living in a hot environment is faced with special problems of heat regulation and water conservation. The Dik-Dik, Rhynchotragus kirki has an acute problem due to its small size which gives it a much larger surface area in relation to its bulk than a larger mammal. Compared to a cow it has to dissipate three times as much heat per kg.

Some small mammals surmount this problem by living in burrows during the heat of the day and come out only at night. The Dik-Dik spends as much time as it can in the shade and as far as possible inactive, not even ruminating. Studies have shown that Dik-Dik feed and ruminate at all hours of the day and night but that peaks appear in the activity at dawn and sunset.

Should it be forced to overheat by being chased, or in a climatic room in the laboratory, it starts to pant. Panting is a heat regulatory device, whereas the heavy breathing in humans is not panting as it is only to supply a larger amount of oxygen to the lungs. Panting is a much more efficient and economical method of cooling than sweating. In the Dik-Dik the rate of panting is adjusted to the ambient temperature. The heart rate is not affected and oxygen intake is actually lowered. The fuel consumption of the body seems to be switched off and the animal lies down to remain as inactive as possible.

Venous blood is cooled in the mouth and nose and a heat exchanger in the body protects the brain from overheating as the brain is more sensitive to heat rise than the rest of the body. Blood coming up the carotid artery is forced through many arterioles close to the venous blood from the musosa of the mouth and nose, thus cooling it on its way to the brain.

Turning to the problem of water conservation we find that the Dik-Dik rarely drinks, its main requirements come from its food. In the wild it drinks by licking the dew off leaves. When fed on a diet of dry lucerne, it does drink, by lapping the surface of the water like a cat.

As leaves of bushes and herbs contain much more moisture than grass, it is a browser, and the more it eats, naturally, the more water it receives. Compared to other ruminents it has a short gut and quick digestion, as the cellulose and fibres are not digested. As the advantage of ruminents is to digest cellulose, it looks as if the Dik-Dik is moving away from the main line of this group.

Water is also saved by reabsorption in the gut and very little comes through in the faeces. The kidneys are also very efficient and use very little water for their work. It seems as if even some of the water used in panting is returned. The long snout produces a cold nose and it seems that the water in the breath condenses and can be swallowed. It is interesting that Gunther's Dik-Dik *Rhynchotragus guentheri*, which lives in much hotter environments, has a still larger and longer snout.

'Corvinella'

CORRECTION - MUTOMO

Miss P.M. Allen has noticed that the milage she gave for Mutomo is incorrect. Page 78 of the July/August *Bulletin* should read ' The journey is just over 270km (or 170 miles) ... '

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir,

On the afternoon of Saturday 26th June 1976, by a dam along the 'Athi River Circuit' in Nairobi National Park, my husband and I saw and photographed a Wooly-necked Stork, *Ciconia episcopus*.

Mrs J.E. Peacock,
P.O. Box 45992, NAIROBI,
Kenya

WHERE HAVE ALL THE BIRDWATCHERS GONE ?

Dear Sir,

Many people complain there is too much on birds in this *Bulletin* and by implication, presumable there are a lot of active birdwatchers among members. I am wondering where they are. I cannot believe that only seven birdwatchers among members have visited Tsavo East and surrounds(for which I include Bushwackers). Yet these are all the replies I have received to my Request for Information in the May/June *Bulletin*. In fact, I know there are at least some more. The *Bulletin* of

August/September 1975 reported on the Society weekend to the Education Centre in Tsavo saying there were at least two dozen members present and over 70 species of birds were seen. Surely someone can tell me where these were ?

May I reiterate that I am not interested only in 'rarities' but also what the transit ornithologist does see on a short visit. (As I mentioned before, I would particularly like notes on the 'common' species from 10 years ago and more). For example only 2 of my 7 correspondents have noted what I consider to be one of the most common and widespread species in the whole park, the Pink-breasted Lark, _Mirafra poecilosterna_.

So, many thanks to the seven (I have replied to each individually) and you others, please send me your records. Otherwise you will only complain when a list is produced, 'Oh, but he's forgotten species x which I saw two years ago ', and I would like the final compilation to be as complete as possible.

Full acknowledgements will be made of all records.

Peter C. Lack,
P.O. Box 14, VOI,
Kenya.

RECORDS SECTION

The Ornithological Sub-Committee has requested that no bird records be published in this issue of the _Bulletin_ until they have worked out a policy on them. This section will deal with the plant and animal kingdoms, excluding the birds. It is hoped that the bird section will be back by the next issue. In the meantime, I must apologize to Mrs Hazel Britton for the record of the Lammergeyer, _Gypaetus barbatus_ from Mount Kulal and Kimilili Track, Mount Elgon (p. 81 July/August _Bulletin_) which I credited to her. These were in fact records from Mr Hugh Buck, my sincere apologies to both of you. I am afraid that I also have to apologize to Miss Susan Brown for leaving out her name on her record of the African Pitta, _Pitta angolensis_, also recorded in the last Bulletin (p. 82)

PLANTS The following are additions to ranges recorded by A.D.Q. Agnew in '_Upland Kenya Wild Flowers_'

Kalanchoe densiflora Crassulaceae Nanyuki District M. Clifton Coll. No 114 June 1976

Oxygonum sinuatum Polygonaceae Kajiado District, M. Clifton Coll. No 48 May 1976

MAMMALS

Potamogale velox Otter Shrew In June 1976 Mr P.J. Schure of the Diocesan Central Workshop at Kakamega found the first recorded Otter Shrew for Kenya. Its known distribution is Nigeria, the Congos and Western Uganda, from Oubangi and Uelle rivers to Bangweulu district of Zambia.

The animal has been recorded from rivers, ranging from fast flowing mountain streams to sluggish coastal rivers and swamps.

This specimen was found in a coffee plantation near a shallow stream, shaded by exotic trees (e.g. Blue Gums). It is interesting that this last relic of a very ancient group of mammals should occur in such an environment. Its survival can probably be attributed to its specialisation saving it from direct competition from both the Otter and the Marsh Mongoose. Its food consists of crabs, frogs, fish and molluscs.

The animal is nocturnal, sleeping in burrows during the day. The burrows, whose entrance is often under water, are along river banks.

As its eyesight is poor, it hunts by smell and feel. On land it moves clumsily, but is a perfect swimmer. Its swimming action is helped by a bilaterally flattened tail.

They live singly or in pairs, but their social organisation is little known.

In conclusion, this discovery has extended the distribution of this species by about 320 km. It also points out the importance of the Kakamega Forest as a relic of the equatorial forest in Kenya.

I.R. Aggundey,
Mammalogist, National
Museum, Nairobi, Kenya

Orycteropus afer Aardvark The Salient, eastern Aberdares, Kenya. July 1976. Interesting as it came into a floodlit glade at night. Only seen once. I.W. Hardy, Box 449, Nyeri, Kenya.

REQUESTS

Ova, larvae or pupa of the Oleander Hawkmoth, Deilephila nerii wanted. I am also interested in contacting anyone interested in rearing and breeding lepidoptera livestock.

R. Adams, F.R.E.S.
Carretera Principal 139,
TAMARACEITA,
Las Palmas de Gran Canaria.

Any information on Mimulopsis solmsii (known as setyot) which is said to flower every seven to nine years and two years after this is reported to cause high mortality to Bongo and Giant Forest-Hog. Any information received would be of great interest, particularly the effect it has on the two above mentioned mammals. Thank you.

Dennie Angwin,
P.O. Box 72833, NAIROBI
Kenya.

GENERAL NOTICES

Conferences in Nairobi

The sixth East African Weed Science Conference will be held at the Milimani Hotel, Nairobi, 4th - 6th October 1976. The fee is 100/- and registration takes place between 8.30 and 10.00 a.m. on 4th October 1976.

For further information please contact Dr. J.J. Gaudet, Department of Botany, University of Nairobi, P.O. Box 30197, Nairobi, Kenya.

The first East African Conference on Entomology and Pest Control will be held at the East African Community Conference Hall, Ngong Road, Nairobi from 6th - 10th December 1976. Registration must be sent to Mr de Lima by 15th September 1976, registration fees are 120/- payable on 6th December 1976. No fees will be accepted before this date. For further information please contact Mr C.P.F. de Lima, National Agricultural Labs., P.O. Box 30028, Nairobi, Kenya.

Books

The Society's Vice Chairman, Dr. John Kokwaro has his new book, Medicinal Plants of East Africa published. This 384 page work, published by the East African Literature Bureau, is the result of 10 years research work by the author, and will be a valuable addition to member's bookshelves. The Society is hoping to obtain copies at a reduced rate, but at the moment it sells for Shs. 62/- with a soft cover and Shs. 90/- with a hard cover.

Mr R.J. Prickett, P.O. Box 792, Nyeri, Kenya is offering his book, The African Ark to members at a reduced rate of Shs. 50/- post free. These will be autographed, so please write direct to Mr Prickett with your orders.

LIBRARY NOTICES

Firstly, out Librarian, Mrs Bella Nyakina has left the Library to take up a two year Librarianship course in the United States. Her place has been taken by Mrs Jennifer Smith who will be assisted by Miss Ashah Owano Hassan.

At a recent meeting of the Joint Library Sub Committee it was decided to slightly amend the rules regarding the use of the Library, and also the opening hours. No periodicals will now be allowed to leave the Museum building. Books will be date stamped when borrowed for a period of one month and unless renewed or returned by that date, a fine of ctc. -/50 will be charged per book per day excluding weekends. Any money thus collected will go into the book fund for new acquisitions. In the case of up-country readers, books may be renewed by 'phone or post card.

These measures have been decided upon in an attempt to stop the loss of a large number of periodicals and books. They will enable us to keep a closer check on the stock.

With regard the opening hours of the Library, it has been decided to keep it open over lunchtime and until 5.30 p.m. Therefore, from Monday 23rd August the Library will be open from 8.30 a.m. - 5.30 p.m., inclusive Monday to Friday.

SOCIETY NOTICES

1977 Subscriptions

It is with great pleasure that we announce that the 1977 full subscription rate will remain at Shs. 50/-. Why not start sending in your cheques for next year now, it will save you having to remember at the end of the year ! However, the

Executive Committee felt that Life memberships and the half-year subscription rate should be raised. As from 1st January 1977 Life Membership will cost Shs 750/-, and from 1st July 1977 half-year subscriptions will be Shs. 35/-. We can only keep the subscription rate down if we have the full support of all our members. That is why we are enclosing with this issue of the Bulletin -

Application Forms

Please give them to your friends and make them join - they will enjoy it and it is good value for money. Only you can help us to continue the Society's work.

Donation

We must thank Mr Arthur Loveridge of St. Helena Island for his very generous donation of Shs. 1500/-. It is hoped that this will be used towards decorating and furnishing the -

Society's Office

Yes, we are finally installed and open for business. Do come and pay us a visit. On sale will the the Car Stickers (come on members, you are not doing a very good job there) for only Shs 2/-, as well as the Journal and its reprints. You can also pick up some other good things such as -

'Upland Kenya Wild Flowers'

which is now out of print world wide, and we have the last few copies. These are being offered to members at the special reduced rate of Shs 136/-, dont miss the chance. We also have copies of that beautifully illustrated book -

'Lake Nakuru, The Lake of a Million Flamingos'

by Charles A. Vaucher. This we are offering at the members reduced rate of Shs. 50/-, why not add one to your Library? For both these books, please place your orders with the Treasurer, Miss D. Angwin, P.O. Box 44486, Nairobi.

Bulletin Material

The Editor wants articles on all natural history subjects for the Bulletin. Do please write about your observations on the animal and plant kingdoms, without your contributions there will be no Bulletin !

Functions

Lise Campbell does a fantastic job organizing the trips and lectures which the Society offers its members, but she needs suggestions from you. Why not write to her, c/o P.O. Box 44486, Nairobi with your ideas for workshops, lectures, day trips and weekend camps, she will be very pleased to receive them.

NEW MEMBERS

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Change of Membership Status, Life Member

Mr W.P. Beattie, P.O. Box 29046, Nairobi.

Junior Members

Paul Horton, P.O. Box 42276, Nairobi.
Michael McCaldin, P.O. Box 40384, Nairobi.
Kimberly Pottle, P.O. Box 42276, Nairobi.

SOCIETY FUNCTIONS

Monday 13th September, 1976 at 5.30 p.m. PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF PROGRAMME. Lise and Tim Campbell will give an infornal talk and slide show on 'Birds and their Environment'.

Sunday 19th September 1976 Miss Priscilla Allen will lead a day excursion to the Kitangila area. Please meet at the National Museum at 9 a.m. and bring a picnic lunch.

9th/10th October 1976 Camping weekend to Thompson'd farm near Timau. Campers must be self-contained with all equipment, food and water and be prepared for cold nights. Distance from Nairobi about 230 km. The object of the excursion will be to study the vegetation and birds in the forest pockets on this high altitude farm. Members wishing to take part should please fill in the enclosed slip and return it, in a stamped addressed envelope to Mrs A.L. Campbell, P.O. Box 14469, Nairobi, before 20th September. Route instructions and further information will then be forwarded.

Monday 11th October 1976 at 5.30 p.m. at the Museum Hall, Nairobi. A talk on the 'Tana River Expedition 1976' by the leader, Mr Nigel Winser and other members of the expedition.

Monday, 8th November 1976 at 5.30 p.m. in the Museum Hall, Nairobi. Mr John Gaudet of the Botany Department, University of Nairobi will give an illustrated lecture on 'Ecology of the Lake Edge Vegetation at Lake Naivasha'.

Sunday, 28th November 1976. Visit to Fairview Estate, Kiambu by courtesy of Loresho & Kiora (Plantations) Ltd.

Monday, 6th December Filmshow.

December 31st - January 2nd Camping visit to Michimukuru Estate, Meru. Details later.

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This offers you free entry to the National Museum, Nairobi; free lectures, films, slide shows or discussions every month in Nairobi; field trips and camps led by experienced guides; free use of the Joint Society-National Museum Library (postal borrowing is also possible); reciprocal arrangements with the Uganda Society's Library in the Uganda Museum, Kampala; family participation: wives and children of members may attend most Society functions; one copy of the *EANHS Bulletin* every two months; a copy of each *Journal* published during your period of membership; the Society controls the ringing of birds in East Africa and welcomes new ringers and runs an active Nest Record Scheme; activities such as plant mapping and game counting are undertaken on a group basis. Membership rates are given at the foot of this page.

JOURNAL

The Society publishes *The Journal of the East Africa Natural History Society and National Museum.* Each issue consists usually of one paper, however, sometimes two or more short papers may be combined to form one number. The aim of this method of presentation is to ensure prompt publication of scientific information; a title page is issued at the end of each year so that the year's papers may be bound together. Contributions, which should be typed in double spacing on one side of the paper, with wide margins, should be sent to the Secretary, Box 44486, Nairobi, Kenya. Authors receive twenty-five reprints of their article free, provided that these are ordered at the time the proofs are returned.

E.A.N.H.S. BULLETIN

This is a duplicated magazine issues six times a year, which exists for the rapid publication of short notes, articles, letters and reviews. Contributions, which may be written in clear handwriting or typed, should be sent to The Editor (*EANHS Bulletin*), Box 44486, Nairobi, Kenya. Line drawings will be considered if they add to the value of the article. Photographs cannot be published.

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Subscriptions are due 1st January. From 1st July you may join at half the yearly rate and receive publications from that date. Application forms for membership are obtainable from the Secretary, Box 44486, Nairobi.

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NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Members of the Society (and non-members) are asked to follow these simple instructions when writing articles or letters for submission to the *Bulletin*. The *Bulletin* is presented six times a year in a duplicated format: the paper size is 20.5×23 cm (10×8 inches), line drawings can be reproduced but the area should not be more than 17.5×23 cm. Lettering on figures should preferably be in 'Letraset', neatly done in Indian ink or left blank: if the last method is followed, the lettering should be indicated on an overlaying sheet and should *not* be done on the figure. Figures should be prepared on good quality white writing paper and not on Bristol Board or other thick material. Whenever plants or animals are mentioned the scientific name should also be given but not in parenthesis. Trinomials should not be used unless there is good reason to do so. Author's names of species are not required.

Contributions may be typed (preferably) or written clearly and should be sent to: M. P. Clifton, Box 44486, Nairobi, Kenya. Receipt of contributions will be acknowledged.

EANHS BULLETIN NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1976

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REPORT ON AN EXPEDITION TO KAKAMEGA FOREST

Between 29th June and 13th July 1976, John Miskell of the National Museum's Entomology Department and I travelled and collected in Kakamega Forest, western Kenya. The purpose of the expedition was to sample the coleopteran and amphibian faunas of the area for the National Museum and the California Academy of Sciences. As our personal research interests lie with the tiger beetles (Cicindellidae) and treefrogs (Hyperoliidae), special effort was made in studying and collecting these groups.

With the exception of birds, representatives of the Kakamega fauna are scarce in the collections of the world's museums. The forest is disappearing rapidly due to logging and clearing for agriculture. This is regrettable for intrinsic conservation reasons but doubly so because Kakamega Forest is unique. The forest is a remnant of periods during the Pleistocene when the climate of the African tropics was different from today. Perhaps because of increased rainfall and/or a lowering of the evaporation rate, the great forests of West Africa expanded eastward to include much of present Kenya. During more recent times the trend in world climate has been toward greater aridity, and the forests have retreated westward to their present position, leaving behind (because of certain morphological characteristics like elevation) such relics as our montane forests of Mt. Kenya, the Aberdares and the Kakamega Forest. In many respects the montane forests and their animal species appear to have undergone some evolutionary change especially at higher elevations, but the fauna and flora of Kakamega have remained recognizably West African in nature. The Kakamega Forest today is the only place in Kenya inhabited by recent West African plants and animal species, as well as endemics and East African species, and thus provides a living laboratory for ecological studies, much needed systematic work and faunal comparisons.

We collected at 12 different localities although many other sites were examined during the course of our trip. My intention here is to report only on the amphibian and reptilian species taken or seen, and I must emphasize that the report is a preliminary one; the taxonomy of many of the species collected is in disarray, and thus many are identified to genus level only.

SNAKES: Although reptiles were not one of our main concerns, several were taken and a number seen. Snakes with primarily West or central African distribution taken include the Forest Cobra * Naja melanoleuca - a 1.8 m individual from a tree overhanging the Isiukhu River and a juvenile from near the Buyangu Forest Station; Jameson's Mamba * Dendroaspis *jamesoni kaimosae* - an enormous female from the Buyangu area; and two species of Bush Viper * *Atheris squamigera* and *Atheris hispida* - the former specimen also from the Buyangu area, the latter, a single individual from near the Kakamega Forest Station. These latter animals inhabit different ecological niches as one would suspect, *A. squamigera* occurring in moderately low, thick flowering bushes, *A. hispida* preferring taller, drier thorn bushes. Two other snakes of this category were not seen: Gold's Cobra, *Pseudohaje goldii*, a canopy dweller, and the Rhinoceros Viper, *Bitis nasicornis*, an inhabitant of riverine thickets. The fact that we did not see these species certainly does not indicate that they are now absent from the forest. However, Gold's Cobra will most surely disappear if the forest continues to contract. The one endemic form, the Kaimosi Blind Snake, *Typhlops kaimosae* was not seen. The status of this form as a distinct species is in some doubt. Snakes with broader distributions seen or taken include :

Hissing Sand Snake	*Psammophis sibilans*	Kakamega Town
House Snake	*Boaedon fuliginosus*	near Shinyalu
Boomslang	*Dispholidus typus*	Buyangu area
Egg-eater	*Dasypeltis scabra*	Buyangu area

The latter is an all-black specimen.

LIZARDS: The predominant terrestrial lizard in the forest appears to be Jackson's Lacerta, *Lacerta jacksoni*. One was taken at Kakamega Forest Station and one seen at Kaimosi. The common arboreal form is an *Agama* of the *atricollis* complex. One was collected in Kakamega town. Abundant in maize fields and at the forest edge is the Chamaeleon, *Chamaeleo ellioti* and presumably it is also present in the forest proper. An inhabitant of natural forest clearings is the Grasstop Skink, *Mabuya megalura*. We collected several in the Buyangu area. In most areas of human habitation the common skink is *Mabuya striata*, a brown lizard with two light yellow dorsolateral stripes. We collected one in Kakamega town and ignored dozens. Finally, in exposed rocky areas are found the 5-lined Skink, *Mabuya quinquetaeniata*, and an as yet unidentified Gecko, *Hemidactylus sp*.

AMPHIBIANS: As the collection and study of frogs was my primary purpose, the data are far too detailed and extensive to present here. However, we observed several phenomena of sufficient interest to merit discussion, and a list is included. First and foremost, in the dam at Kaimosi we collected a good series of the Disk-toed Rana, *Hylarana albolabris*. This is a West African species and, as far as I know, our series constitutes the first published Kenya record of the animal. The Kakamega *Hylarana* are virtually indistinguishable from those I collected several weeks later in Ghana.

The incredible diversity of species in the tropics, and also the precise division of habitat were demonstrated to us with a vengeance at Lubao, a small market place about 11 km north of Kakamega on the road to Webuye (Broderick Falls). After several heavy rains, a drainage ditch filled with rainwater to an approximate depth of 30 cm, and there, on the nights of 5th and 6th July, we collected 10 species of 8 genera of frogs:-

Running Frog *Kassina senegalensis*
Clawed Frog *Xenopus* ? *victorianus* ?
Sharp-nosed Frog *Ptychadena* sp.
Puddle Frog *Phrynobatrachus natalensis*
Banana Frog *Afrixalus quadrivittatus*
Toad *Bufo* sp. * two species determined by different voice
Toad *Bufo* sp. * and morphology
Sedge Frog *Hyperolius kivuensis bituberculatus*
Sedge Frog *Hyperolius* sp.
Squeaker *Arthroleptis* sp.

All the above species were calling from very different levels of distinctly different vegetation in and around the drainage ditch (with the exception of *Arthroleptis* and *Xenopus*). Many of these species were collected in other localities as well. Additional amphibian species collected during the expedition include :

Squeaker *Arthroleptis* sp.2 Kakamega Forest Station
Toad *Bufo* sp. 3 Kakamega Forest Station
Common Frog *Rana* sp. Kakamega Forest Station, near Kaimosi on road to Kapsabet.
Sedge Frog *Hyperolius lateralis* Yala River (1 specimen)
Sedge Frog *H. c. cinnamomeoventris* Isiukhu River, Yala River, Buyangu area.
Sedge Frog *H. v. viridiflavus* Kaimosi dam
Sedge Frog *H. nasutus* Chemelil

THE STATE OF THE FOREST: It is difficult to comment on the present state of Kakamega Forest never having seen it in earlier days and lacking aerial perspectives. Nevertheless, the following information may be of value. Most of the localities mentioned can be found on sheets 102/2 and 102/4 of the Kenya 1:50,000 series of maps entitled KAKAMEGA and KAIMOSI respectively.

Needless to say, the northern outliers, the Mlaba and Kisere Forests, are long since gone, the victims of logging activities. An interesting fact is that the felling of the last trees there some time ago was heralded by a large influx of Kakamega snakes to the Nairobi Snake Park. On this trip we were informed by Luka Matekwa, a local, long-time collector for the Snake Park, that after the felling, the Malaba and Kisere snakes took refuge in the gallery forest along the Isiukhu River and were far more easily caught there than in their original habitat.

The road southeast through Shinyalu toward the Kakamega Forest Station passes through country entirely given over to agriculture. In fact, the forest does not appear until one approaches very close to the station. Good forest can still be found by hiking through the 'grid' just North of the station to Kaluna Glade. This enormous opening is surrounded to the North, West and East by what appears to be virgin primary growth, but considerable hiking is necessary to reach these areas. The 'grid' itself is deceptive in that it has been selectively cut (according to the Chief Forester), Eucalyptus and other non-native species are present, and access is difficult because of the extremely dense secondary growth along the trails. The same applies to the trail leading East from the station to the pump-house, another well-known locality.

The northern circuit: Just below the Kakamega Forest Station is a junction; one road leads northeast toward Vihiga and completely circumnavigates the northern part of the forest, and the other takes a southeasterly direction, encircling the southern half of the forest. Taking the former road, there is a good patch of isolated primary forest where the road crosses the Lugusida River, but beyond this lie several kilometers of plantation Pinus. Just past the Lugusida bridge is a dirt road leading West into the pines and terminating in a maize shamba. It is significant that in spite of the alien vegetation here, we found the shed skin of a Forest Cobra, Naja melanoleuca indicating that this species is somewhat adaptable and that the area is not so sterile as one would suspect. There is a dirt road leading west to the Kakamega sawmills 7.5 km north-west of this junction. An additional track leads North from the mills and rejoins the main road at Chemneko. This latter track appears to pass through portions of good forest but the road is bad, and lacking 4-wheel-drive, we were unable to explore it.

With one surprising and very pleasant exception, the rest of the northern circuit is bleak. As one continues on this road the forest becomes quite distant and no access tracks are apparent. However, 11.3 km North of Kakamega a small sign marks the dirt road to Buyangu Forest Station. The track, 4.4 km long, passes through excellent stands of forest and terminates at a rock quarry, also at the edge of the forest. This road afforded us the best access to the northern part of Kakamega Forest. Moreover, if one drives exactly 3.2 km down the Buyangu track from the main highway, then hikes East through the secondary growth, a beautiful glade is to be found, reminiscent of Kaluna

Glade but much smaller. Surrounded by excellent forest, the opening is about 100 by 50 meters, contains a central stream and marsh, and is an ideal place for the observation of animal life.

The southern circuit: It appeared to us that there is less accessible continuous forest left in the southern half than in the northern. Taking the southeast fork of the junction below Kakamega Forest Station, the first access to primary forest occurs at km 4.6, with a trail leading off to the left. The next, a well-known bird watching locality, is a road uphill to the right at km 11.3 which ends in shambas. Both this trail and the surrounding area appear to be primary forest. Shortly beyond the latter track, the paved highway from Kaimosi to Kapsabet is reached. Turning right toward Kaimosi isolated patches of forest can be found along water ways at km 1.7 and 12.8 from the highway junction. We found no real forest in the Kaimosi area. We took many small confusing roads which criss-cross the southern section of Kakamega Forest but these were invariably lined with agricultural land and human habitation.

* Specimens deposited at Nairobi Snake Park.

Robert C. Drewes,
California Academy of Sciences. Research Associate,
National Museum of Kenya.

NOTES ON CARMINE BEE-EATERS SEEN NESTING IN ILERET ON THE 8th MAY 1974

On 8th May 1974 I was flying a Piper Cherokee 5Y AJE of the Flying Doctor Services on my regular monthly visit to Ileret dispensary on the northeast shore of Lake Rudolf (now Lake Turkana), Kenya. We had visited the ranger post first at Allia Bay and were approaching Ileret from the South in the early afternoon. I was accompanied by Dr David Webster, Medical Officer in charge of Marsabit District, and his friend Dr David Clarke.

The short 'Boma' airstrip is situated one km southeast of the Police Post on a small sandy plateau. Letting down to check the runway we noticed a pink mist above the airstrip; getting nearer we saw it was a mass of crimson birds swirling around, rising and diving to earth where they entered hollows in the ground. There must have been many thousands.

The ground looked quite uneven. The southeast portion of the runway was honey-combed with underground nests made by the birds, a small mound of darker sand about 12 - 15 cm high piled at the entrance of each nest which was dug in the flat sandy surface of the airstrip.

It was possible to make a short landing on the undisturbed 250 m of the northwest end of the runway. The birds, which we then identified as Carmine Bee-eaters, Merops nubicus, flew around, calling and twittering ceaselessly but they did not seem to be afraid of us.

They were continuously entering the nests and coming out of them. We could not stop to open a nest as we were in a hurry to see the waiting patients. The nests were dug very close together and were covering an area of about 250 m long by 30 m wide. They were about 120 or 150 cm from each other, at least one to each 2 square m (= 3000 - 4000 pairs).

The policeman in charge of the post suggested that his men flatten the nests on the centre line so that we could use the whole length of the runway on take off, but I begged him to leave the nests alone as no other aeroplane was expected until I returned in a month's time. To this he agreed and we managed to take off amidst this swirling mass of birds, without hitting any of them, having switched on the landing light to scare them away.

When we returned five weeks later on 13th June 1974, the runway was nearly deserted save a dozen scattered nests and we only saw a few Bee-eaters flying around.

We have not seen any such nests since, though we flew regularly every month to Ileret in 1975 and 1976.

Dr David Webster, quite by chance, reading Van Hohnel's narrative of Count Teleki's discovery of Lakes Rudolf and Stephanie found a charming passage refering to a similar occurence on 4th April 1887, in exactly the same area: pages 154 and 155 of the 1894 edition:

"We first crossed a pretty little acacia wood with fresh green foliage and sandy soil, quite park-like in appearance. Walking was almost a delight on the dry ground in the clear pure air. Countless birds rather bigger than swallows, with beautiful red plumage, azure-blue heads and long thin tail feathers, circled continuously about our heads and filled the air with a deafening twittering. Their nests, of which there were thousands, were in holes in the flat ground. After an hour's walk we issued from the wood, which extended in a westerly direction to the side of the lake."

According to Von Hohnel's map, this wood is only a few miles North of Ileret.

Dr Anne Spoerry,
P.O. Box 27, SUBUKIA,
Kenya.

Dr Spoerry sent the above record to Dr Leslie Brown who passed it on for publication, and comments below. Ed.

Ref. Dr Spoerry's very interesting record, I should mention that some years ago, in the early sixties, a police Inspector stationed at Ileret wrote to me about a similar occurrence. He had not been able to identify the birds; but I urged him to write a short note for the Society's _Journal_, under his own name, as it was clear to me that they were Carmine Bee-eaters. He never did so, and I have unfortunately lost his original letter, so that I cannot even quote his name.

As far as I know, this is the first definite breeding record for Carmine Bee-eaters in Kenya, other than Von Hohnel's (not identified by him, but clearly Carmine Bee-eaters). It is also, as far as I know, the only record of this species breeding in flat ground. Mackworth-Praed and Grant (1953) gives a record of 10,000 pairs breeding at Timbuktu in an almost flat sandbank; but in that area there is the possibility of confusion with the Rosy Bee-eater, _Merops malimbicus_, which regularly breeds in colonies of this nature. I found one of 18,500 pairs at Eggan on the river Niger, in a situation evidently resembling the Timbuktu colony, on 19th May 1942 (Brown, L.H. 1948; _Ibis_ **90**: 534). The normal breeding site of the Carmine Bee-eater is in a vertical bank, like that of most colonial Bee-eaters.

The May breeding date agrees with the breeding dates in Ethiopia just to the north of this area. Colonies are known on the lower Omo River in vertical banks, in the Awash Valley, with definite breeding in March and probable breeding in April and May. The Awash Valley colonies have also shown (as found by Dr Spoerry at Ileret) that breeding is not necessarily annual (Urban and Brown 1971. _A Checklist of Ethiopian Birds_; Haile Selassie 1 University Press). From Dr Spoerry's record it seems probable that laying took place in April, a period of maximum rainfall. Most records from the northern tropics are in this period, April - May, early in the main rains.

Dr L.H. Brown,
P.O. Box 24916, KAREN,
Kenya.

The two above letters were passed to Mr Cunningham van Someren, Ornithologist at the National Museum, who comments below. Ed.

This record may well be an important part of the answer we have long been seeking. "Where do all the Carmine Bee-eaters, which we see in great numbers at the coast over the Christmas period, go to (and nest) during the rest of the year".

A massive ringing campaign may help solve the riddle for there is a counter-part in the Sudan. Each year, 1960 - 1966, in September I saw thousands upon thousands of Carmine Bee-eaters, adults and first year plumage juveniles. They were said to nest in steep banks on the Blue Nile and Rahad River. Though I flew many miles along these rivers no nesting colony was located. By mid-to-end of October, the Bee-eaters had disappeared - where did they go, and this still remains a mystery.

G.R. Cunningham van Someren
P.O. Box 24947, NAIROBI,

Finally, two breeding records from northern Kenya have come to light:
Mr A.D. Forbes-Watson said breeding was first reported in 1960's by Veterinary Officer, Mike Cooper. Tens of thousands were said to be nesting in holes in banks near Lokichokio.

Mr R.E. Leakey knew of breeding at Ileret in or prior to 1972. Mr Forbes-Watson and Mr Leakey found the end of breeding on or near the airstrip at Ileret in July 1972. Ed.

OBSERVATIONS AT MAKALIA FALLS
NAKURU NATIONAL PARK

On 11th August 1976 while camping at Makalia Falls at the southern extremity of the Nakuru National Park, I observed a large number of White-fronted Bee-eaters, Merops bullockoides perched in trees around the hillside to the West of the falls. On climbing the grassy bank to observe them more closely I came upon a sandy gorge running East - West from which emerged approximately 100 more of these birds. They appeared to be nesting in the banks on either side of the gorge; there being about 50 such holes. There were a total of about 150 - 200 birds, some of which appeared to be fledglings.

Also observed that same evening around the falls were African Black Duck *Anas sparsa* and Mountain Wagtail, *Motacilla clara* neither of which are mentioned in either the official guide or J.G. Williams list in his National Parks Guide, and Hartlaub's Turaco, *Tauraco hartlaubi* which is said to be uncommon.

The campsite at Makalia Falls is a good one and is much less used than the Njoro River one, mainly because it is so far from the Lake and so difficult to find. However, I think it is well worth making the effort to find the site and I shall certainly be revisiting it as soon as possible.

Paul E. Beverley,
Kianyaga High School,
P.O. Box 1020, KIANYAGA,
Kenya.

IMPORTANT SYSTEMATIC CHANGES IN BIRDS

R.B. Payne and C.J. Risley have recently, 13th August 1976, published a revision of the Herons. 'Systematics and Evolutionary Relationships among the Herons (Ardeidae)'. *Miscellaneous Publications, Museum of Zoology, University of Michigan*, No. 150. Inevitably there are changes in genus and specific names, if Payne and Risley are to be followed. Thus changes will be required in Praed and Grant, Handbook Volume 1, the Backhurst and Backhurst Preliminary Check List 1970 and also A.D. Forbes-Watson Skeleton Checklist 1971. The changes are as follows :

	Praed & Grant	F-Watson	Backhurst	From
Cattle Egret	No 42	28	p. 3	*Ardeola ibis*
	to	EGRETTA IBIS		
Green-backed Heron	No 45	29	p. 3	*Butoroides striatus*
	to	ARDEOLA STRIATA		

	Praed & Grant	F-Watson	Backhurst	From
Rufous-bellied Heron	No 47	30	p. 3	*Buteroides rufiventris*
	to *ARDEOLA RUFIVENTRIS*			
Great White Egret	No 37	32	p. 3	*Egretta alba*
	to *ARDEA ALBA*			
Reef Heron	No 41	--	p. 3	*Egretta garzetta schistacea*
	to *EGRETTA GULARIS ASHA*			

Egretta gularis asha has priority over *schistacea*, Payne in press.

Extracted from National Museums of Kenya, Department of Ornithology Newsletter No 6, September 1976. Ed.

WHALE-HEADED STORK

In June 1971 I saw a Whale-headed Stork, *Balaeniceps rex* at the top of Fourteen Falls, Thika, Kenya.

I was then not a member of the Natural History Society and apart from pointing it out to the other people with me, I did not mention it to anyone else as I knew perfectly well that this particular bird lived in Africa ! Subsequently, of course, I have learned that it should not have been there at all, but as the Whale-headed Stork cannot possibly be confused with anything else, I am assured that it was.

In April this year, my husband and I went camping with the Tidmands at the foot of the Nguruman Escarpment and on the way home decided to have a look at the edge of the Engare N'giro Swamp just north of Shombole. The place was truly swampy at the time and there was an amazing amount and variety of birds about.

On our arrival in Nairobi we looked through various bird books to recapitulate and discuss what we had seen. On coming across a picture of the Whale-headed Stork the Tidmans said they had seen two of them at the edge of the swamp as we drove away. We were in seperate cars and unfortunately, like myself, they did not think they were of any great importance and did not bother to point them out to us. They did wonder, however, how we could possibly have missed seeing them ourselves !

Mrs Ida Preston,
P.O. Box 21342, NAIROBI.

This letter was shown to Mr Cunningham van Someren, the Ornithologist at the National Museum, who comments below.

The nearest I know of is the Yala area, Lake Kanyabole, western Kenya and the papyrus swamps of Lake Victoria or Entebbe and Lake Kiogo, Uganda. It is probably in the papyrus around Mwanza and Musoma, but there are no records. The nearest south is Mweru Marsh, North Zambia !

G.R. Cunningham van Someren
P.O. Box 24947, NAIROBI.

TWICE-YEARLY BREEDING OF SMALL BIRDS
AT MUGUGA, KENYA

G.R. Cunningham van Someren (*antea* May/June 1976 p. 50) draws attention to the use of colour ringing for 'proving' that small passerine birds use both rainy seasons in East-of-Rift Kenya for breeding. One can hardly doubt it among the tamer local Hirundinidae which nest so obligingly under the eaves of dwelling houses and farm buildings.

We have a convenient Rock Martin's nest, *Hirundo fuligula* on our back verandah at Muguga, which was built in May 1968, and has been repaired and used continually since. A full nesting cycle occupies the nesting site for about four months and includes prospecting the site when rain first threatens, courting, repairing the nest when rain falls and mud is available, laying, brooding, rearing and fledging. Finally the nest is used as a dormitory for a few weeks by the young fledglings. With a four-month breeding period it should just be possible to get in three broods a year. Our pair tried it in 1972 but lost one of their clutches. Two broods is usual.

Since 1968, clutches of eggs have been laid (numbers of eggs in brackets) as follows :-

	Long Rains	Short Rains
1968	May (3)	None
1969	March (3)	None
1970	March (2)	November (2)
1971	(no observation)	1972 January (2)

	Long Rains		Short Rains
1972	June (3) (none hatched)		? December? (2 fledglings seen Jan. '73)
1973	May (3) *		November (2)
1974	May (3)	July (2)	December (3) *
1975	May (3)		November (2)
1976	June (2) *		- - - -

There was an obvious change in the spotting pattern of the eggs at the clutches marked with an asterisk *, and I took this to mean that the old hen had been succeeded by another bird. I did not see the eggs in December 1972 (I was away on leave), so it is possible that the old hen was replaced after her infertile clutch in June of that year and not when I noticed the change in egg pattern in 1973.

In February 1970, I wanted to find out which was the hen bird and I marked one of the pair with a twist of coloured wire on its right foot. This was quite futile, because you cannot see their tiny feet after the courting stage when they perched on a ledge or rafter. On 4th March 1970, I marked the bird on the nest (presumably the hen) with a spot of gold paint on the right wing tip, and its mate, perched alongside the nest, on the left wing tip. This was easily seen when the birds flew, but was no good on the nest because they cross their wing tips, when at rest, and one gets hopelessly confused. I never was certain which was the hen ! I did however, get some information out of it; the following November one of the pair had a frayed wing tip and the other showed scraps of paint on its wing tip. Evidently the same pair nested for a second time in 1970.

While half of the clutches observed comprised three eggs, and the parents often rear all three to near the fledging stage, one chick nearly always falls from the nest and (even if quickly replaced) dies. One year three were successfully fledged but one died within a week of fledging. Two is the usual crop from our nest.

We have a Red-rumped Swallows' nest, *Hirundo daurica* under the eaves of our garage, but, this being a flask-shaped nest, it is much more difficult to watch closely and my notes are less complete. I have noted the following fledgings (numbers of young in brackets) :-
June 1968 (2); December 1968 (1); July 1970 (2); February 1971 (?); December 1971 (?); July 1972 (2); July 1973 (3); June 1974 (3); August 1974 (2); June 1975 (3); August 1975 (2); June 1976 (2).

From this it appears that these swallows can use the long rains to raise two broods and sometimes the short rains also. We have had miserable short rains, of less than half our long-term average, since 1972, which may account for my having no recent record of a short rains Swallow brood.

W.G. Dyson,
P.O. Box 30148, NAIROBI.

BIRD NOTES FROM KAREN

Strange Behaviour of Rough-wing Swallows

Earlier this year (notebook stolen) I recorded the following strange behaviour of a pair of Rough-wing Swallows, Psaidoprocne pristoptera. In the early morning a pair would appear and fly around the bamboo clump in front of the house and would make repeated swoops up and in the vicinity of a disused Sunbirds nest at the very end of a drooping culm. At first I thought they were obtaining insects but then I saw one bird touch the nest and remove a piece of material. They made repeated attacks on the nest, each time taking something, flying off and dropping it. (They were not nesting at the time). This behaviour persisted day after day until the nest was ruined and the remains eventually fell to the ground.

At the end of August 1976, a pair of Swallows was again seen attacking the remains of a nest of Holub's Weaver, Ploceus xanthops slung at the very end of a drooping culm. This time it was in the late afternoon and evening that they came to the bamboo and have now systematically pulled the nest to pieces. Mrs J. Horne watched with me a few days ago. It is a puzzle to think what purpose such behaviour served.

Cuckoo-Shrikes at Karen

Early in the morning of 28th August 1976, I noted just in front of the house, a yellow-shouldered Black Cuckoo-Shrike, Campephaga flava searching the shrubs, then a little later a second bird appeared but this time it was the all-black form without a trace of shoulder patches. An hour or so later amongst a bird party hunting the bushes was yet a third Cuckoo-Shrike, but this time it clearly had an almost white shoulder patch. This was so striking that I picked up my field glasses for a better view - indeed virtually white. The most amazing thing was that later a red-shouldered bird appeared, C. phoenicea !

Thus in one morning four forms of this Cuckoo-Shrike had been seen, more or less in the same place in the garden. We have recorded the yellow, red and all-black birds before, but never at more or less one and the same time. I would add that the Purple-throated Cuckoo-Shrike, C. quiscalina and the Grey Cuckoo-Shrike, C. caesia, are also found in my forest, the former rare and the latter common. The white-shouldered bird must be an aberration, but it is strange that the yellow and red shouldered should appear together. Perhaps they should not be regarded as races or species, but simply as colour forms. The females, however, are slightly different. In the National Museum collection there is a male with a red patch, but with two yellow feathers in it ! Normally, the base of the red feathers is orange or yellow. In April 1976, with John Miskell, we netted four females but all appeared to be 'flava'. We even had a re-trap.

Roosting of Hadada and Sacred Ibis at Karen

We have always had a few resident pairs of Hadada Ibis, Bostrychia hagedash around the dam and a pair nested some years ago and raised two youngsters. Over the past few years their numbers as roosting birds have increased and they have been joined by Sacred Ibis, Threskiornis aethiopica.

With the drought, the level of the dam has decreased steadily and doubtless many other dams in the Karen area are nearly, if not, dry but more and more Hadada and Sacred Ibis have taken to roosting in trees near the dam wall. They arrive any time from just after 18.00 hrs to the late commers around 18.50 hrs. They fly in pairs, what appears to be a family group or a 'V' of birds, up to nine in such a group. The Hadada are sometimes extremely noisy, calling as they come in but at other times they are completely silent and glide down to the dam and up to the trees. Sometimes they meet a thermal which causes them to undertake the most extraordinary slide-slip aerobatics until they reach a certain level above the water where they 'flatten out' and glide up to the roost.

The Sacred Ibis on the other hand, appear usually in a 'V' formation and come down the valley and glide into the roost, but they too, at times, meet this odd air current and are forced to execute quite remarkable aerial manouvers to right their flight. They are silent, we have never heard a sound from them.

In the morning the Hadada leave any time after 06.05 hrs and fly upstream, sometimes silent, and at other times calling loudly, as a pair or in a group. Then come the Sacred Ibis, usually in a 'V' formation and head upstream but there are times, I suspect wind conditions determine this, that instead of heading due East to gain height, they had to circle and then gain height to cross the forest in the valley. These birds feed at times at the dam in periods of low water, such as the present or else they go far afield, to the sewage lagoon at Karen and even as far away as the grasslands at Dagoretti.

G.R. Cunningham van Someren,
P.O. Box 24947, NAIROBI.

SOME NOTES ON THE GENETS, GENETTA spp.

PART 1

Although Genets are often referred to as cats they belong to the *Viverridae*, and are related to the Mongooses. There are no fewer than seven species in Africa, and others inhabit the warmer regions of the Old World.

The Genets of Kenya are represented by three species, and their distribution is determined by rainfall. The Genet of the low-rainfall area is the Common or Neumann's, *Genetta genetta*. It is a pale buff-coloured Genet sometimes almost white, with numerous black spots. The Genet of the medium-rainfall areas is the Large Spotted, *Genetta tigrina* and is found in the mountain forests, with a certain degree of overlap, both Genets being sometimes found together. In the semi-tropical rain-forest of western Kenya a third species exists. It is rare and is of West African affinity and is the Small Spotted Genet, *Genetta servalina*.

Genets are small carnivores ranging from 37 - 55 cm in length, and all have well-furred tails held low and which, in certain species, may be nearly as long as the body. The general impression of Genets is of animals with elongated bodies and faces, pointed muzzles, short legs, and a speed of action which accentuates their snake-like appearance.

Their food is varied, consisting of small birds, rats, mice, bird eggs, frogs and fruit. With certain species, beetles and moths are also eaten in large quantities. Genets are adept tree-climbers and, being almost completely nocturnal, there is no doubt that they kill numbers of roosting song-birds. The claws are long and sharp. They have tremendous powers of gripping and, although the teeth are numerous and effective, there is little doubt that their claws play a large part in the act of killing. The ears are small and round, and move continuously as the animal detects different noises. Genets are characterised by spots, stripes or Jaguar-like patches, varying considerably in the different species but giving them all a handsome appearance. The tail has from six to twelve black rings.

The most recent record of the rare western Small Spotted Genet was of a specimen collected in the Kakamega Forest in 1955. However, this is a dense forest and others could well still be there. When I was Forest Officer in this area during 1958 I was walking across the lawn one night and my torch light picked up one crouched on the low branch of a Nandi Flame Tree, Spathodea nilotica. It was the very first Genet I had even seen in this country and I marvelled at its beauty as it sat blinking until I almost touched it.

All the Genets appear to be of a rather confiding nature and when I was hunting in the dry thorn-bush country I often found their footprints in the sand of the campsites. Often during the night they would climb onto the folding table looking for crumbs. These were the Common Genet, and one such experience was never forgotten. I had been fishing the Uaso Nyiro River for Barbus, a bony fish not valued for its flesh, but my hunting has been unsuccessful and a few fish were needed. A sudden tropical rain-storm blew up and put me to flight when I had only a couple of fish about a kilogram each and by the time I reached my tent I was soaked. It was nearly dark so I stripped and tumbled into my sleeping-bag. My new, collapsable landing net containing the two fish I dropped onto the sandy ground beside my camp bed.

Sometime during the night I awoke to the sound of crunching jaws and realized that some animal was in my tent. Not only was it in my tent but eating my breakfast ! Pulling a torch from beneath my pillow I switched it on. A Genet was making a noisy supper of the larger of my two fish. Before I could move it grabbed the net by the meshes and galloped through the open door and into the wilderness of bush. I could hear the bump bump as the telescoped handle kept hitting the ground behind it.

I was clad only in a kikoy, that African cloth draped around the waist, and it took me a few minutes to find slippers and follow. By then the Genet had a 50 m start but I pounded bravely behind, the kikoy catching in the thorns and coming adrift. I did not mind too much losing my breakfast but the landing-net was an expensive one. The grooves made in the sand were easy to follow and soon I caught up, the Genet reluctantly letting go and bounding away into the darkness. I returned at a more leasurely pace, carrying the net and the two fish miraculously still inside.

The good fish I put in a safe place out of reach of the most agile Genet. The partly eaten one I decided to experiment with. Sharpening a stick with my hunting knife I transfixed it in the sandy ground at the head of my bed. About an hour later I again heard a crunching sound. This time I just smiled contentedly, rolled over, and went back to sleep. A Genet as cheeky as that was welcome to its supper.

Most Genets are only observed lying dead on the roads. Their nocturnal nature and trusting habits make them extremely vulnerable. Over the years I did meet them in the forests and when hunting the plains but only when I joined the staff of a game-viewing lodge in the Aberdares in 1969 did I really get to know them.

When this lodge opened seven years ago a Large Spotted Genet was often observed at night climbing into the bushes in pursuit of roosting birds. Soon the moths and beetles attracted by the big lamps were appreciated as an easy source of food and they ventured onto the grass in front of the building. Mostly it was a small female but some nights we also saw a male. At that time the montane forest was in a state of balance and no other Genets were in evidence. Today no fewer than eight Genets can be identified and we have recorded five animals simultaniously. They take over the building from dusk until dawn, climbing on the roof by means of the drainpipes and scampering along the passages. Feeding them is a nightly ritual and they must be some of the most photographed animals in the world.

Genets are not normally gregarious but have a distinct territory. When competing against each other, either for food, territory or in courtship, they hiss and spit a great deal, and also chatter much as Mongooses do. Litters appear to be but two, and these are born in a leafy nest in the centre of a dense bush where it is both warm and dry. Usually one of the kittens dies when quite young. It is possible that feline enteritis accounts for them. Nature appears to help keep the balance by erratic breeding, a practice common to many animals having few enemies. Genets have been watched racing for the wall of the building and climbing up when a White-tailed Mongoose, Ichneumia albicauda appeared. They may kill some of the young ones. A Verreaux's Eagle Owl, Bubo lacteus, was once recorded swooping down on to a Genet, carrying it for some distance, and then dropping it; when it was found dead. In that instance it was thought to have operated its rather weak scent glands in its extremity. At other times these Owls have been watched ignoring Genets which were within easy striking distance, and it must be presumed that Genets have few enemies.

During those early nights the Genets were encouraged to come near the building by tossing an egg on to the grass. It was quickly discovered that unless the egg broke upon landing they could not eat it. They would play with it but never once was there an attempt to break it by throwing it between their hind legs against a rock as is the case with some species of Mongoose. Probably eggs only form a small part of a Genet's normal food and this was borne out by the fact that some Genets do not eat the raw egg now put out as a part of the nightly ritual, whilst others only eat the yolk.

The first female Genet could be recognized by a perforated ear. Very soon it was apparent that other Genets were being attracted by the free and abundant food. There was a great deal of fighting and hissing, and at that stage the local pair always appeared to win.

Litters began to appear, usually in May. The first intimation would be when Ginny, as we called the first female, came to the edge of the bush and squatted on the grass. On each side of her would be peeping two little faces, and eventually the owners would venture forth. At that stage they would be maybe six weeks old and no more than 15 cm long. One kitten usually just disappeared. The survivor would not come into the building with its mother until it was about half-grown. When it grew up the mother invariably drove it away to find a new territory.

Eventually the attraction of free food became so strong that it overcame the respect for territory which all Genets appear to have. A pole had been placed to facilitate climbing on to the varandah and Ginny would sit at the top of this, hissing and defying all other Genets to pass her. They simply jumped over her back, and there were so many of them that she could do nothing about it. It is very interesting to stand at night on the highest point of the building and watch Genets move in from various territories. Like Leopard, Panthera pardus, they travel from cover to cover, rarely trusting themselves out in the open. Also like Leopard, they dislike rain, arriving very late if it has been a wet evening.

Animal behaviour patterns do change in the wild of course, though usually this takes place over hundreds, and sometimes thousands, of years. One species of Mongoose is extremely gregarious. It is interesting to speculate as to whether Genets could become gregarious as a result of un-natural conditions.

Genets are very independant little animals in spite of their trusting nature. When they are very hungry some of them will climb into your arms to be fed. They allow themselves to be tickled and stroked and give the impression of being well-behaved pets. Once their stomachs are full however, they just leave, and no amount of endearments will bring them back. They are wild animals of the forest and they intend to remain that way.

R.J. Prickett,
P.O. Box 792, NYERI,
Kenya.

To be completed

DISTRIBUTION OF GREATER KUDU

D.R.M. and J. Stewart 'The Distribution of Some Large Mammals in Kenya', Journal of the East Africa Natural History Society and Coryndon Museum, June 1963, Vol XX1V No 3 (107), map page 41, shows the distribution at that date of the Greater Kudu, *Tragelaphus strepsiceros*. Recently R. McDonald (pers. comm.) mentioned seeing eight bulls in the Loita area, somewhat West of the record shown by the Stewarts. On 1st and 6th August 1976 a cow and a bull respectively were seen on the road between Ngomeni and Kora by A.Duff-MacKay and myself. This would be in the new Kora Game Reserve, South of the Tana River from the Meru National Park. I was informed by T. Adamson that Greater Kudu were quite numerous in this area. This is an extension eastwards on the map. In July 1959 with J. Abrahams of the British Museum (Natural History) we saw a fine bull on the rocky scarp behind the Ngong Hills in the early evening and a somewhat indifferent yet recognisable photograph was taken of the animal. This is another possible extension unless the single record marked on the Stewart's map referes to the Ngong Hills. I am also informed by V. Fayad (pers. comm.) that Greater Kudu are to be found on the Nguruman Range, North of Lake Magadi.

G.R. Cunningham van Someren,
P.O. Box 24947, NAIROBI.

OBSERVATIONS OF A FISH EAGLE FEEDING ON AN AFRICAN HARE AT LAKE NAIVASHA

The following incident occured on 4th October 1976 at about 12.45 hrs near Crescent Island, Lake Naivasha.

As I walked along the causeway connecting Crescent Island to Goat Island, its small southern neighbour, I spotted a lone Fish Eagle, *Haliaeetus vocifer* standing on the road. Since these birds seldom take to the ground except near or at the water's edge, I suspected it was feeding on something. The Eagle flew to a nearby perch after detecting my approach. There, in the road, rested a partially consumed African Hare, *Lepus capensis*. The bird had begun to eat from the hindquarters; muscles of the hip - lower limb joint (primarily the gluteal complex) had been ripped away and were nowhere to be seen. Removed from the exposed abdominal cavity, the intestines and other internal organs lay beside the animal, uneaten.

The Fish Eagle glided away and I proceeded onwards. When I returned approximately two hours later all evidence of the mammal had vanished.

Although I did not see the kill, very likely the Eagle made it. A pair occupies a territory which encompasses much of Goat Island and a small cove to the West of the causeway. Quite often one or both perch in the Fever Trees, *Acacia xanthophloea* almost directly above that fatal spot. Another possible explanation is piracy, a reported practice of *Haliaeetus vocifer* (Brown, 1972), but I know of no other large predatory bird in the area at the time, and ground predators are primarily crepuscular or nocturnal.

Also, I would like to relay, second-hand from an observer, another small mammal as a possible food species, Kirk's DikDik, *Rhynchotragus kirkii*.

Sometime last April while he strolled about on Crescent Island, Dr Charles Nelson saw two Fish Eagles fighting, apparently over a dead DikDik. It was a pregnant female. Nobody observed the actual killing or death, and seemingly neither bird had tasted the creature's flesh.

Leslie Brown (1972) lists Fish and Frogs as the Eagle's mainstay, but notes that also eat many water birds, especially the young of Cormorants, Darters, Herons, Spoonbills, Flamingos, and carrion. In addition Roberts (1975) specifies Rats and young Egrets. This may be the first report of a Fish Eagle ingesting an African Hare and at least demonstrating interest in a Kirk's DikDik. If so, we may further appreciate the somewhat eclectic nature of the Fish Eagle's diet.

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James A. Clapp,
c/o C. Nelson,
P.O. Box 427, NAIVASHA,
Kenya.

A NOTE ON THE FOODPLANT OF THE REGAL PURPLETIP

On 8th August 1976, a final stadium larva of the Regal Purpletip butterfly, *Colotis regina* (Trimen), was found near Voi in Tsavo East National Park, Kenya. It was feeding openly on top of a *Thylachium thomasii* (Capparidaceae) bush at about 12.00 hrs. It was reared through, pupating on 12th August and emerging approximately two weeks later.

Thylachium is one of the few bushy plants to remain in leaf during the dry season in Tsavo East, the other notable ones being *Salvadora persica* (Salvadoraceae), a *Boscia* sp. (Capparidaceae) and a *Strychnos* sp. (Loganiaceae). Of these *Thylachium* and *Salvadora* have a much tighter construction and so act as better wind shields than the others, and during the dry season around August when there are persistent easterly winds, a large number and high diversity of insects can be found at the leeward side of these bushes. *Thylachium* in particular attracts many Pierids to its flowers.

Thylachium and *Salvadora* have more fleshy leaves than the other two. The wet/dry weight ratio for *Thylachium* and *Boscia* were determined in early September to be c. 2.75 and c. 1.75 respectively. Despite the general shortage of food and moisture for herbivores in the dry season *Thylachium* seems to be little grazed, Giraffe were once seen browsing on it and Waterbuck were once seen possibly eating small amounts. Baboon were seen eating the fruits, but apparently not the leaves.

Pierid butterflies are normally considered to be distasteful to at least some birds due to compounds obtained from the larval foodplants, and members of the genus *Colotis* are not known to be exceptions to this. All the known foodplants for members of this genus are capparids, and this, together with the small amount of browsing by mammals suggests that *Thylachium* also produces distasteful compounds. Myself and one other tasted its leaves and thought the best way to describe them was like the peel of a cooking apple.

Donald L.J. Quicke,
5 George St. Solihull,
West Midlands, ENGLAND.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir,

Crown of Thorns Starfish

I have noticed recently that another record of the Crown of Thorns Starfish, *Acanthaster planci*, was observed off the coast of Kenya (EANHS *Bulletin*, March/April 1976). The presence of this organism must surely not be suprising along suitable portions of this coast, as it is a normal component of Indo-Pacific coral reef communities.

In December 1975, while conducting a survey of the gastropod population at Malindi Marine National Park, I observed the Crown of Thorns at least five times while goggling in the Coral Gardens. On two of these occasions two individuals were seen on the same dive. It has also been observed that other locations including Horn's Pool, just North of Kilifi (December 1975); Nyali Beach, the outer reef (November 1974); Kikambala, the outer reef (June 1975); and offshore from Shimoni at Kisiti Island (January 1975).

The major predators of the Crown of Thorns are the Pacific Triton, *Charonis tritonis*, and to a lesser degree certain wrasses (Ormond & Campbell, 1971). Endean (1969) states that an adult triton takes about a week to devour an adult Crown of Thorns. Presently, this predator is rare due to intense collecting pressure imposed on this large and conspicuous gastropod. Thus one would expect a proportional increase in the Starfish population as the predator becomes rarer. Interestingly though, on the reef of Maziwi Island, located approximately 12 km offshore of Pangani, Tanzania (a relatively protected area), I observed more than 10 individuals of the Starfish in an area approximately 10 m x 50 m (May 1975). In one instance seven individuals were seen in a single two-hour search. Yet one would expect a remote location to afford adequate protection to the natural predators, preventing any build-up of the Starfish population.

According to Ormond & Campbell (1971) a normal population occurs at a density of 4 to 5 individuals per km of reef length. As a population of Crown of Thorns increases, a grouping of individuals with a definite front is formed. Field observers should be alert to this kind of build-up.

The point worth noting is that the occurrence of this coral predator is a natural and expected phenomenon in tropical coral reef communities. It is the massive build-up from the normal population that becomes a concern. Whether or not the massive outbreaks which sometimes occur as on the Great Barrier

Reef of Australia are cyclical events, one can be sure that the uncontrolled collecting and the generally deteriorating state of the reefs of the East African coast will lead to increases in the Crown of Thorns populations unless prompt and effective measures are taken to moderate the present trends, and especially to protect the predators.

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John S. Yaninek, Dept. of
Zoology, University of
California at Berkeley,
California, U.S.A.

Dear Sir,

A few days ago as I was watching a mass of Bees, Apis mellifera hard at work in and out of some moonflowers, Datura sanveolens, I happened to catch sight of a Praying Mantis, Mantis religiosa just as it caught a bee in flight. It was well and truly caught and quite unable to move its wings. The Mantis had hardly begun its meal when it was suddenly surrounded by about 15 to 20 angry-sounding Bees which looked as though they were attacking the Mantis but in fact did not seem to come into contact with it at all. This lasted about 10 to 15 seconds and then things settled down to normal and the Mantis, which had not seemed very concerned about it all, continued its meal.

The following day I witnessed the same sort of thing, but with a much smaller Mantis. Some sort of alarm signal must have been sent out by the Bee is distress. Is this sent out in the form of a scent or is the Bee able to produce some sound, other than with its wings, which attracts the other Bees ? I would be very grateful if you could enlighten me.

Mrs Ida Preston,
P.O. Box 21342, NAIROBI.

Bees produce a scent from special glands near the tail. I quote from Butler's 'The World of the Honey Bee', 'This scent smells somewhat 'flower-like'or, perhaps, as another observer has described it, rather like slightly musty hay and.....such bee-produced scent is very attractive to other bees'. It is this scent which causes a whole colony to attack when one bee has stung another animal, as the scent gland is attached to the sting and continues to send out its signal sometime after the sting has been pulled out of the bee. M.P. Clifton.

RECORDS SECTION

The following are additions to range in A.D.Q. Agnew's 'Upland Kenya Wild Flowers'

Bidens biternata Compositae May 1976 Kajiado. M.Clifton Coll. No 46.

Schkuria pinnata Compositae May 1976 Kajiado. M. Clifton Coll. No 66

WANTED

Flora of West Tropical Africa, Vol. 1 and 2, J. Hutchinson & J.M. Dalziel.

Indigenous Trees of the Uganda Protectorate, Eggerling & Dale.

Wanted by a very keen naturalist at realistic prices, condition not that important, provided they are not in a state of total disintegration. Please write to :

Mr P. Markham, Greenacres School, P.O. Box 46919, NAIROBI.

GENERAL NOTICES

Visitors to the coast may take advantage of a special day-long trip sponsored by the Lamu Museum according to the tides.

The boat leaves the Museum dock for Pate Island where participants embark for a short trek across the island to tour the ruins of Pate Town which flourished in the 16 - 18th Centuries. In addition to exploring the various buildings of this once important site, visitors have an excellent opportunity to view the flora and fauna of this island.

Return to the boat for a picnic lunch, it is a short ride over to Manda Island and a brief walk to the 10 - 12 th Century ruins of Manda Town, the oldest such settlement so far discovered on the East African coast. Bits of very fine porcelain pottery can still be found around the site testifying to its position as a wealthy town early in history.

There is time for a swim off the beach of Manda Island before climbing aboard and the final sail back to Lamu. Price Shs 65.00 per person, a bargain for explorers ! The Museum furnishes a competant guide and boatman for the trip. Participants bring their own food and drink. Caution : wear a hat and bring sun aids.

Since the trip can only be conducted when the tide allows sufficient water in the channels, it may be wise to write to Lamu Museum, P.O. Box 48, LAMU, Kenya, in advance to check the schedules of boat trips. Trips are taken only when there are sufficient people.

Carol Schmidt,
National Museums of Kenya,
P.O. Box 40658, NAIROBI.

LIBRARY NOTICE

The Library has the following books for sale :

GILL, Leonard: *First Guide to South African Birds*.
2 copies - one with torn flyleaf, 1936 ed. KShs 90.00
one 2nd ed. 1940 KShs 100.00

JACKSON, Sir Frederick J.: *Game Birds of Kenya and Uganda* 1926
1 copy - frontispiece missing KShs 500.00

RUGGLES-BRISE, Cecily J.: *Notes on the Birds of Dar-es-Salaam* 1927
1 copy KShs 60.00

GOODWIN, A.J.H.: *Loom of Prehistory* 1946
5 copies KShs 20.00 each

Please send in your letters to: The Treasurer, P.O. Box 44486, NAIROBI, to reach her by 15th November 1976. The envelope should be marked BOOKS in the top left hand corner. The first letter opened on the 15th November will secure the book.

The Librarian would like to remind members of the Society that the Library is now open from 8.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. every weekday including the lunch hour.

It is with very great regret that we have to announce the sudden and untimely death of Mrs Ida Preston. Mrs Preston was a member of the Executive Committee, organised and lead several Society functions, and cheerfully performed the thankless task of keeping the mailing list up to date and printing the addresses. Our sincere condolences go to her husband, mother and son.

SOCIETY NOTICES

1977 Subscription Renewals

Members will find a 1977 subscription renewal notice with this Bulletin. Although this does not fall due until 1st January 1977, why not renew now and get it out of the way. If a mistake has been made, and you receive a renewal notice although your subscription has been paid, please let us know. We try to keep the books up to date, but it is difficult when the office is run on a voluntary basis.

Books for sale

'Nakuru, Lake of a Million Flamingoes', by Charles A. Vaucher. This beautiful book is still available through the Society at a special reduced rate of Shs. 50.00. Postal orders are also accepted, but please add on Shs 6.00 to cover packing and postage. Please send your orders to The Treasurer, P.O. Box 44486, NAIROBI.

'Medicinal Plants of East Africa' by Dr John Kokwaro, the Vice Chairman of the Society. This very valuable book is now on sale in the Society's office in the National Museum, at a special members rate of Shs. 55.00 for the soft cover. The hard cover edition will cost about Shs. 85.00 to members.

Journals

Journal numbers 156, 157, 158 and 159 are enclosed with this issue. Further copies will be available in the Society's office.

Car Stickers

Have you bought your car stickers yet ? They are still available at most lectures, some camps and in the office. Only Shs. 2.00 each !

Photocopies

The Library is now able to photocopy articles from Journals housed in the Library at a cost of Shs. 1.00 per page. Please ask the Librarian on duty.

1977 Calendars

The Society will be selling very attractive colour calendars for 1977. Mr John Karmali, the Society's Chairman, has six bird photographs in full colour printed as a calendar, and these will be available to members at Shs. 15.00 each. Please ask in the office, or buy one at the next lecture !

Bulletin Articles

The Editor would like to thank all those who sent in articles for this issue, but please continue to do so. We will need more for the next issue, so why not put pen to paper and send in your natural history observations. The Editor's address is P.O. Box 44486, Nairobi.

New Members

The Secretary would like to thank those who have helped our membership drive by joining up new members, but please keep up the good work. As we have said so many times before, it is only if you help us keep the numbers high that we can keep the subscription rate low, so do mention the Society and its activities to your friends who have not yet joined.

Society's Office

Yes, we are at the National Museum, do come and see us !

NEW MEMBERS

Local Full Members

Mr and Mrs R.G. Abel, Thika High School, Private Bag, THIKA, Kenya.
Mr John Ambrose, P.O. Box 30228, NAIROBI.
Mr and Mrs Wm. F. Anderson, Methodist Guest House, P.O. Box 25086, NAIROBI.
Mr and Mrs L.G. Baker, Directorate of Overseas Surveys, P.O. Box 30046, NAIROBI.
Mr H.M.H. Braun, P.O. Box 25021, NAIROBI.
Elizabeth M. Brooman, Limuru Girls School, P.O. LIMURU, Kenya.
Ms R.A. Curtis, P.O. Box 48932, NAIROBI.
Mr C.T. Eddy, P.O. Box 520, KISII, Kenya.
Dr Glen Hausfater, c/o Park Warden, Amboseli National Park, P.O. Box 18, NAMANGA, Kenya.
Mr R.B. Highton, P.O. Box 258, MALINDI, Kenya.
Miss L. Jorgensen, P.O. Box 30254, NAIROBI.
Mrs P.A. Larkman, P.O. Box 47383, NAIROBI.
Miss J.M. Lloyd, P.O. Box 30035, NAIROBI.
Mr R.I. MacGregor, P.O. Box 12, ELBURGON, Kenya.
Mary M. Oates, P.O. Box 24693, NAIROBI.
Mr and Mrs Gar Pardy, P.O. Box 30481, NAIROBI.
Mrs James Parkey, P.O. Box 47431, NAIROBI.
Mr W.J. Plumb, Thika High School, Private Bag, THIKA, Kenya.
Mr R.V. Patel, P.O. Box 27025, NAIROBI.
Mr D.W. Walton, P.O. Box 30214, NAIROBI.
Miss P. Watts-Russell, c/o British Council, P.O. Box 40751, NAIROBI.

Local Life Members

Mrs Ann Allen, P.O. Box 221, NANYUKI, Kenya.
Prof. T.R. Odhiambo, P.O. Box 30772, NAIROBI.
Dr Anne Spoerry, P.O. Box 27, SUBUKIA, Kenya

Local Junior Members

I.M. Fielding, P.O. Box 30083, NAIROBI.
A.J. Fielding, P.O. Box 30083, NAIROBI.

Local Institutional Member

Y.M.C.A. C.T.C., P.O. Box 17073, NAIROBI.

Overseas Full Members

Warren E. Savary, 1450 Lexington Ave., San Mateo, California.
Simon E, Townsend, 13 Parkstone Avenue, Pascoe Vale South 3044 Victoria, Australia.

SOCIETY FUNCTIONS

Monday 8th November 1976 at 5.30 p.m. at the Museum Hall, Nairobi: Mr John J. Gaudet will give an illustrated lecture on 'Ecology of the Lake Edge Vegetation at Lake Naivasha'.

Sunday 28th November 1976 Visit to Fairview Estate, Kiambu, by courtesy of Loresho & Kiora (Plantations) Ltd. Please meet at the Museum, Nairobi at 9.45 a.m. bringing a picnic lunch and be prepared for walking. The object of the field trip will be to study the flora and fauna in the river valleys of a coffee estate.

Monday 6th December 1976 at 5.30 p.m. at the Museum Hall, Nairobi: Filmshow. The following films will be shown:

'Africa: Forest or Desert' by Simon Trevor 30 minutes
'The Dambuilders'. The film deals with the change in the environment when a dam is built.

Sunday 19th December Marine Life Walk led by Mrs Fleur Ng'weno. Please meet at 8.30 on the verandah of Coraldene Beach Hotel, Bamburi (approx. 8 km North of Mombasa) wear canvas shoes and be prepared to wade. The purpose of the trip is to study the plant and animal life in the tidepools on the old reef near the beach.

December 31st/ January 2nd 1977 Camping visit to Michimukuru Estate in the Nyambeni Hills, Meru. Campers must be self contained with all equipment, food and drinking water. Be prepared for cold nights, camping will be in an open field. The object will be to study the vegetation and animals in the Nyambeni Hills high altitude forest which is near the estate. A short visit to the tea factory will be arranged for those interested. Members wishing to take part should please fill in the enclosed slip and return it with a stamped addressed envelope to Mrs A.L. Campbell, P.O. Box 14469, Nairobi before December 15th. Route instructions and further information will then be forwarded.

Monday 10th January 1977 at 5.30 p.m. at the Museum Hall, Nairobi, an illustrated lecture by Mr Jan Gillett of the E.A. Herbarium on 'The Main Families of East African Plants and how to Recognise them'.

January 28th/30th 1977 Week end trip to Bushwackers Safari Camp on the Athi River near Kibwezi. Members taking part will be guided by committee members familiar with plants and birds in the surrounding bush. For booking please contact Mrs Jane Stanton, P.O. Box 33, Kibwezi. Bushwackers has self service bandas for 2 or more people at up to Shs 30.00 per person per night. Distance from Nairobi 225 km, mostly tarmac. Camping also available.

Wednesday morning bird walks meet in front of the Museum every week at 8.45 a.m.

THE EAST AFRICA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Chairman: J. S. Karmali

Vice Chairman: Dr J. Kokwaro

Editor, Jl E. Africa nat. Hist. Soc. Nat. Mus.: Mrs J. Hayes

Treasurer: Miss D. Angwin

Librarian: Mrs J. Hayes

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Joint Library Sub Committee (Society representatives): Mrs J. Hayes, Dr J. Kokwaro.

MEMBERSHIP

This offers you free entry to the National Museum, Nairobi; free lectures, films, slide shows or discussions every month in Nairobi; field trips and camps led by experienced guides; free use of the Joint Society-National Museum Library (postal borrowing is also possible); reciprocal arrangements with the Uganda Society's Library in the Uganda Museum, Kampala; family participation: wives and children of members may attend most Society functions; one copy of the *EANHS Bulletin* every two months; a copy of each *Journal* published during your period of membership; the Society controls the ringing of birds in East Africa and welcomes new ringers and runs an active Nest Record Scheme; activities such as plant mapping and game counting are undertaken on a group basis. Membership rates are given at the foot of this page.

JOURNAL

The Society publishes *The Journal of the East Africa Natural History Society and National Museum.* Each issue consists usually of one paper, however, sometimes two or more short papers may be combined to form one number. The aim of this method of presentation is to ensure prompt publication of scientific information; a title page is issued at the end of each year so that the year's papers may be bound together. Contributions, which should be typed in double spacing on one side of the paper, with wide margins, should be sent to the Secretary, Box 44486, Nairobi, Kenya. Authors receive twenty-five reprints of their article free, provided that these are ordered at the time the proofs are returned.

E.A.N.H.S. BULLETIN

This is a duplicated magazine issued six times a year, which exists for the rapid publication of short notes, articles, letters and reviews. Contributions, which may be written in clear handwriting or typed, should be sent to The Editor (*EANHS Bulletin*), Box 44486, Nairobi, Kenya. Line drawings will be considered if they add to the value of the article. Photographs cannot be published.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Life	One payment: Kshs. 500/-
Institutional (schools, libraries) .	annual payment: Kshs. 50/-
Full	annual payment: Kshs. 50/-
Junior (full-time student, no *Journal* supplied) . . .	annual payment: Kshs. 10/-

Subscriptions are due 1st January. From 1st July you may join at half the yearly rate and receive publications from that date. Application forms for membership are obtainable from the Secretary, Box 44486, Nairobi.

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